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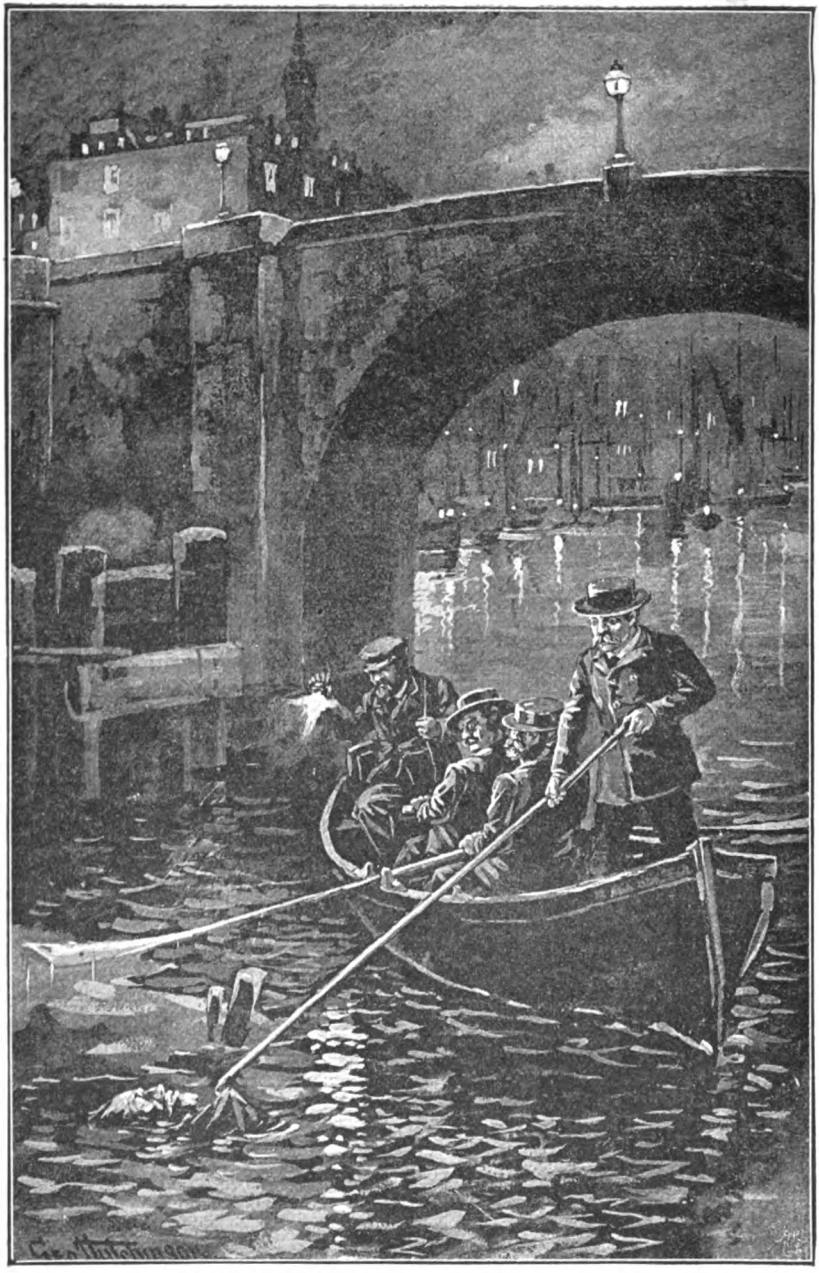

THE CORPSE WASHED UP BY THE RIVER."

THE IDLER

MAGAZINE.

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY.

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JEROME K. JEROME & ROBERT BARR.

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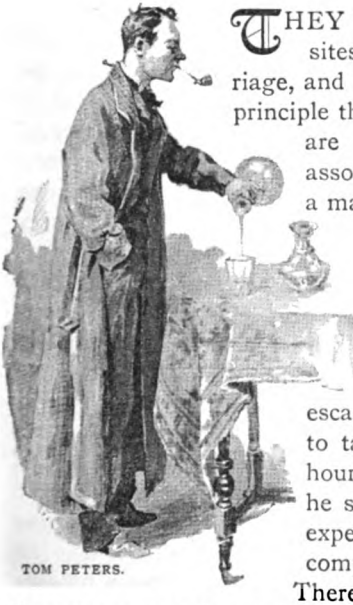
CHAPTER I.

CURIOUS COUPLE.



TOM PETERS.

EVERARD G. ROXDAL.

THEY say that a union of opposites makes the happiest marriage, and perhaps it is on the same principle that men who chum together are always so oddly assorted. You shall find a man of letters sharing diggings with an auctioneer, and a medical student pigging with a stockbroker's clerk. Perhaps each thus escapes the temptation to talk "shop" in his hours of leisure, while he supplements his own experiences of life by his companion's.

There could not be an odder couple than Tom Peters and Everard G. Roxdal—the contrast began with their names, and ran through the entire chapter. They had a bedroom and a sitting-room in common, but it would not be easy to find what else. To his landlady, worthy Mrs. Seacon, Tom Peters's profession was a little vague, but everybody knew that Roxdal was the manager of the City and Suburban Bank, and it puzzled her to think why a bank manager should live with such a seedy-looking person, who smoked clay pipes and sipped whiskey and water all the evening when he was at home. For Roxdal was

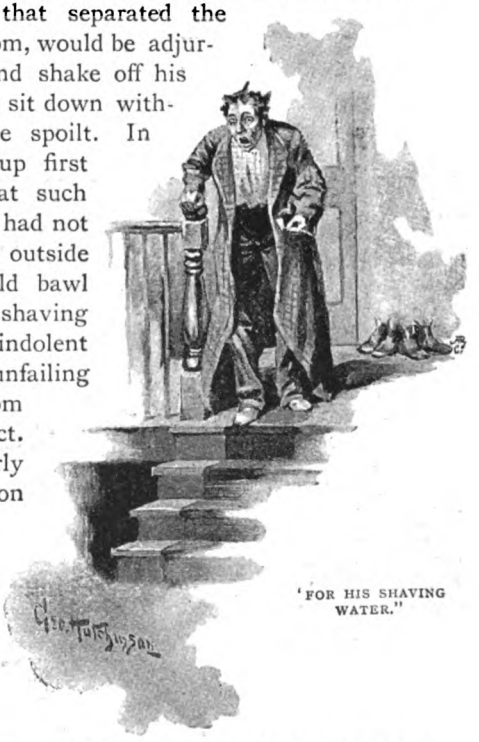
as spruce and erect as his fellow-lodger was round-shouldered and shabby; he never smoked, and he confined himself to a small glass of claret at dinner.

It is possible to live with a man and see very little of him. Where each of the partners lives his own life in his own way, with his own circle of friends and external amusements, days may go by without the men having five minutes together. Perhaps this explains why these partnerships jog along so much more peaceably than marriages, where the chain is drawn so much tighter, and galls the partners rather than links them. Diverse, however, as were the hours and habits of the chums, they often breakfasted together, and they agreed in one thing—they never stayed out at night. For the rest Peters sought his diversions in the company of journalists, and frequented debating rooms, where he propounded the most iconoclastic views; while Roxdal had highly respectable houses open to him in the suburbs, and was, in fact, engaged to be married to Clara Newell, the charming daughter of a retired corn merchant, a widower with no other child.

"ASKED TWENTY-FIVE PER CENT. MORE."

Clara naturally took up a good deal of Roxdal's time, and he often dressed to go to the play with her, while Peters stayed at home in a faded dressing-gown and loose slippers. Mrs. Seacon liked to see gentlemen about the house in evening dress, and made comparisons not favourable to Peters. And this in spite of the fact that he gave her infinitely less trouble than the younger man. It was Peters who first took the apartments, and it was characteristic of his easy-going temperament that he was so openly and naïvely delighted with the view of the Thames obtainable from the bedroom window, that Mrs. Seacon was emboldened to ask twenty-five per cent. more than she had intended. She soon returned to her normal terms, however, when his friend Roxdal called the next day to inspect the rooms, and overwhelmed her with a demonstration of their numerous shortcomings. He pointed out that their being on the ground floor was not an advantage, but a disadvantage, since they were nearer the noises of the street—in fact, the house being a corner one, the noises

of two streets. Roxdal continued to exhibit the same finicking temperament in the petty details of the *ménage*. His shirt fronts were never sufficiently starched, nor his boots sufficiently polished. Tom Peters, having no regard for rigid linen, was always good-tempered and satisfied, and never acquired the respect of his landlady. He wore blue check shirts and loose ties even on Sundays. It is true he did not go to church, but slept on till Roxdal returned from morning service, and even then it was difficult to get him out of bed, or to make him hurry up his toilette operations. Often the mid-day meal would be smoking on the table while Peters would smoke in the bed, and Roxdal, with his head thrust through the folding doors that separated the bedroom from the sitting-room, would be adjuring the sluggard to arise and shake off his slumbers, and threatening to sit down without him, lest the dinner be spoilt. In revenge, Tom was usually up first on week-days, sometimes at such unearthly hours that Polly had not yet removed the boots from outside the bedroom door, and would bawl down to the kitchen for his shaving water. For Tom, lazy and indolent as he was, shaved with the unfailing regularity of a man to whom shaving has become an instinct. If he had not kept fairly regular hours, Mrs. Seacon would have set him down as an actor, so clean shaven was he. Roxdal did not shave. He wore a full beard, and, being a fine figure of a man to boot, no uneasy investor could look upon him without being reassured as to the stability of the bank he managed so successfully. And thus the two men lived in an economical comradeship, all the firmer, perhaps, for their mutual incongruities.



'FOR HIS SHAVING WATER.'

CHAPTER II.

A WOMAN'S INSTINCT.

It was on a Sunday afternoon in the middle of October, ten days after Roxdal had settled in his new rooms, that Clara Newell paid her first visit to him there. She enjoyed a good deal of liberty, and did not mind accepting his invitation to tea. The corn merchant, himself indifferently educated, had an exaggerated sense of the value of culture, and so Clara, who had artistic tastes without much actual talent, had gone in for painting, and might be seen, in pretty toilettes, copying pictures in the Museum. At one time it looked as if she might be reduced to working seriously at her art, for Satan, who finds mischief still for idle hands to do, had persuaded her father to embark the fruits of years of toil in bubble companies. However, things turned out not so bad as they might have been, a little was saved from the wreck, and the appearance of a suitor, in the person of Everard G. Roxdal, ensured her a future of competence, if not of the luxury she had been entitled to expect. She had a good deal of affection for Everard, who was unmistakably a clever man, as well as a good-looking one. The prospect seemed fair and cloudless. Nothing presaged the terrible storm that was about to break over these two lives. Nothing had ever for a moment come to vex their mutual contentment, till this Sunday afternoon. The October sky, blue and sunny, with an

"TOM SHAMBLED FROM THE SITTING-ROOM."

Indian summer sultriness, seemed an exact image of her life, with its aftermath of a happiness that had once seemed blighted.

Everard had always been so attentive, so solicitous, that she was as much surprised as chagrined to find that he had apparently forgotten the appointment. Hearing her astonished interrogation of Polly in the passage, Tom shambled from the sitting-room in his loose slippers and his blue check shirt, with his eternal clay pipe in his mouth, and informed her that Roxdal had gone out suddenly earlier in the afternoon.

"G-g-one out," stammered poor Clara, all confused. "But he asked me to come to tea."

"Oh, you're Miss Newell, I suppose," said Tom.

"Yes, I am Miss Newell."

"He has told me a great deal about you, but I wasn't able honestly to congratulate him on his choice till now."

Clara blushed uneasily under the compliment, and under the ardour of his admiring gaze. Instinctively she distrusted the man. The very first tones of his deep bass voice gave her a peculiar shudder. And then his impoliteness in smoking that vile clay was so gratuitous.

"Oh, then you must be Mr. Peters," she said in return. "He has often spoken to me of you."

"Ah!" said Tom, laughingly, "I suppose he's told you all my vices. That accounts for your not being surprised at my Sunday attire."

She smiled a little, showing a row of pearly teeth. "Everard ascribes to you all the virtues," she said.

"Now that's what I call a friend!" he cried, ecstatically. "But won't you come in? He must be back in a moment. He surely would not break an appointment with *you*." The admiration latent in the accentuation of the last pronoun was almost offensive.

She shook her head. She had a just grievance against Everard, and would punish him by going away indignantly.

"Do let *me* give you a cup of tea," Tom pleaded. "You must be awfully thirsty this sultry weather. There! I will make a bargain with you! If you will come in now, I promise to clear out the moment Everard returns, and not spoil your *tête-à-tête*." But Clara was obstinate; she did not at all relish this man's society, and besides, she was not going to throw away her grievance against Everard. "I know Everard will slang me dreadfully when he comes in if I let you go," Tom urged. "Tell me at least where he can find you."

"I am going to take the 'bus at Charing Cross, and I'm going straight home," Clara announced determinedly. She put up her parasol in a pet, and went up the street into the Strand. A cold shadow seemed to have fallen over all things. But just as she was getting into the 'bus, a hansom dashed down Trafalgar Square, and a well-known voice hailed her. The hansom stopped, and Everard got out and held out his hand.

"I'm so glad you're a bit late," he said. "I was called out unexpectedly, and have been trying to rush back in time. You wouldn't have found me if you had been punctual. But I thought," he added, laughing, "I could rely on you as a woman."

"I *was* punctual," Clara said angrily. "I was not getting out of this 'bus, as you seem to imagine, but into it, and was going home."

"SHE NESTLED AGAINST HIM."

"My darling!" he cried remorsefully. "A thousand apologies." The regret on his handsome face soothed her. He took the rose he was wearing in the buttonhole of his fashionably-cut coat and gave it to her.

"Why were you so cruel?" he murmured, as she nestled against him in the hansom. "Think of my despair if I had come home to hear you had come and gone. Why didn't you wait a moment?"

A shudder traversed her frame. "Not with that man, Peters!" she murmured.

"Not with that man, Peters!" he echoed sharply. "What is the matter with Peters?"

"I don't know," she said. "I don't like him."

"Clara," he said, half sternly, half cajolingly, "I thought you were above these feminine weaknesses; you are punctual, strive also to be reasonable. Tom is my best friend. From boyhood we have been always together. There is nothing Tom would not do

for me, or I for Tom. You must like him, Clara; you must, if only for my sake."

"I'll try," Clara promised, and then he kissed her in gratitude and broad daylight.

"You'll be very nice to him at tea, won't you?" he said anxiously. "I shouldn't like you two to be bad friends."

"I don't want to be bad friends," Clara protested; "only the moment I saw him a strange repulsion and mistrust came over me."

"You are quite wrong about him—quite wrong," he assured her earnestly. "When you know him better, you'll find him the best of fellows. Oh, I know," he said suddenly, "I suppose he was very untidy, and you women go so much by appearances!"

"Not at all," Clara retorted. "'Tis you men who go by appearances."

"Yes, you do. That's why you care for me," he said, smiling.

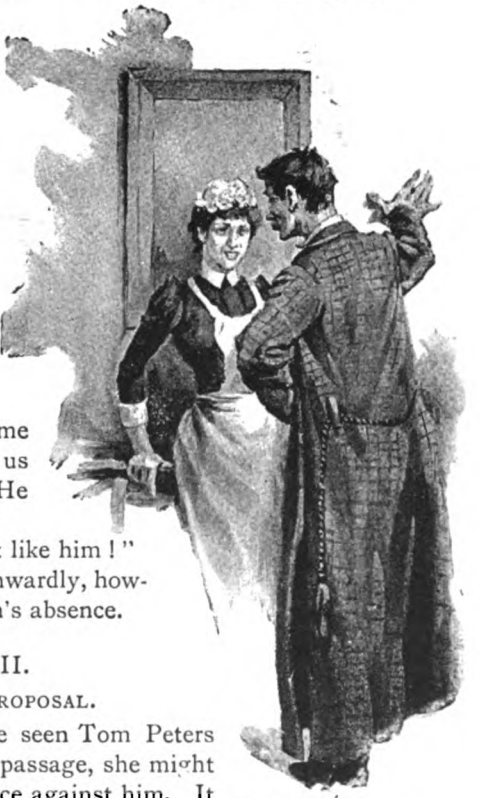
She assured him it wasn't, and she didn't care for him so much as he plumed himself, but he smiled on. His smile died away, however, when he entered his rooms and found Tom nowhere.

"I daresay you've made him run about hunting for me," he grumbled.

"Perhaps he knew I'd come back, and went away to leave us together," she answered. "He said he would when you came."

"And yet you say you don't like him!"

She smiled reassuringly. Inwardly, however, she felt pleased at the man's absence.



"CARRYING ON WITH POLLY."

CHAPTER III.

POLLY RECEIVES A PROPOSAL.

If Clara Newell could have seen Tom Peters carrying on with Polly in the passage, she might have felt justified in her prejudice against him. It must be confessed, though, that Everard also carried on with Polly. Alas! it is to be feared that

men are much of a muchness where women are concerned; shabby men and smart men, bank managers and journalists, bachelors and semi-detached bachelors. Perhaps it was a mistake after all to say the chums had nothing patently in common. Everard, I am afraid, kissed Polly rather more often than Clara, and although it was because he respected her less, the reason would perhaps not have been sufficiently consoling to his affianced wife. For Polly was pretty, especially on alternate Sunday afternoons, and when at ten p.m. she returned from her outings, she was generally met in the passage by one or other of the men. Polly liked to receive the homage of real gentlemen, and set her white cap at all indifferently. Thus, just before Clara knocked on that memorable Sunday afternoon, Polly, being confined to the house by the unwritten code regulating the lives of servants, was amusing herself by flirting with Peters.

"You *are* fond of me a little bit," the graceless Tom whispered, "aren't you?"

POLLY AND ROXDAL.

"You know I am, sir," Polly replied.

"You don't care for anyone else in the house?"

"Oh no, sir, and never let anycne kiss me but you. I wonder how it is, sir?" Polly replied ingenuously.

"Give me another," Tom answered.

She gave him another, and tripped to the door to answer Clara's knock.

And that very evening, when Clara was gone and Tom still out, Polly turned without the faintest atom of scrupulosity, or even jealousy, to the more fascinating Roxdal, and accepted his amorous advances. If it would seem at first sight that Everard had less excuse for such frivolity than his friend, perhaps the seriousness he showed in this interview may throw a different light upon the complex character of the man.

"You're quite sure you don't care for anyone but me?" he asked earnestly.

"Of course not, sir!" Polly replied indignantly. "How could I?"

"But you care for that soldier I saw you out with last Sunday?"

"Oh no, sir, he's only my young man," she said apologetically.

"Would you give him up?" he hissed suddenly.

Polly's pretty face took a look of terror. "I couldn't, sir! He'd kill me. He's such a jealous brute, you've no idea."

"Yes, but suppose I took you away from here?" he whispered eagerly. "Somewhere where he couldn't find you—South America, Africa, somewhere thousands of miles across the seas."

"Oh, sir, you frighten me!" whispered Polly, cowering before his ardent eyes, which shone in the dimly-lit passage.

"Would you come with me?" he hissed. She did not answer; she shook herself free and ran into the kitchen, trembling with a vague fear.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CRASH.

One morning, earlier than his earliest hour of demanding his shaving water, Tom rang the bell violently and asked the alarmed Polly what had become of Mr. Roxdal.

"How should I know, sir?" she gasped. "Ain't he been in, sir?"

"Apparently not," Tom answered anxiously. "He never remains out. We have been here three weeks now, and I can't recall a single night he hasn't been home before twelve. I can't make it out." All enquiries proved futile. Mrs. Seacon reminded him of the thick fog that had come on suddenly the night before.

"What fog?" asked Tom.

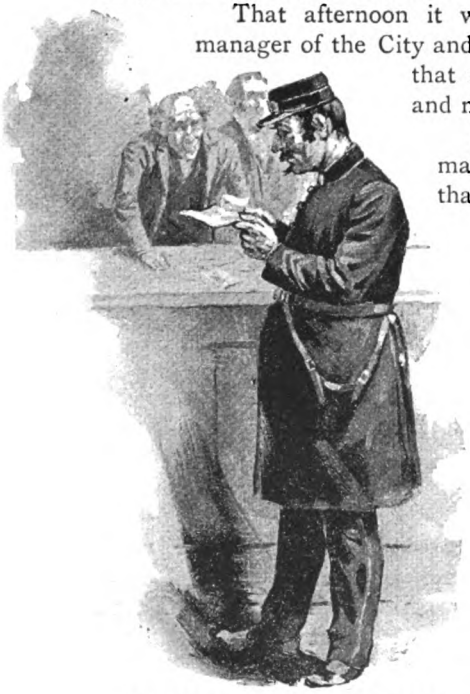
"Lord! didn't you notice it, sir?"

"No, I came in early, smoked, read, and went to bed about eleven. I never thought of looking out of the window."

"It began about ten," said Mrs. Seacon, "and got thicker and thicker. I couldn't see the lights of the river from my bedroom. The poor gentleman has been and gone and walked into the water." She began to whimper.

"Nonsense, nonsense," said Tom, though his expression belied his words. "At the worst I should think he couldn't find his way home, and couldn't get a cab, so put up for the night at some hotel. I daresay it will be all right." He began to whistle as if in restored cheerfulness. At eight o'clock there came a letter for Roxdal, marked "immediate," but as he did not turn up for breakfast, Tom went round personally to the City and Suburban Bank. He waited half-an-hour there, but the manager did not make his

appearance. Then he left the letter with the cashier and went away with anxious countenance.



"SCOTLAND YARD OPENED THE LETTER."

That afternoon it was all over London that the manager of the City and Suburban had disappeared, and that many thousand pounds of gold and notes had disappeared with him.

Scotland Yard opened the letter marked "immediate," and noted that there had been a delay in its delivery, for the address had been obscure, and an official alteration had been made. It was written in a feminine hand and said: "On second thoughts I cannot accompany you. Do not try to see me again. Forget me. I shall never forget you."

There was no signature.

Clara Newell, distracted, disclaimed all knowledge of this letter. Polly deposed that the fugitive had proposed flight to her, and the routes to Africa and South America were especially watched. Some months passed without result. Tom Peters went about overwhelmed with grief and astonishment. The police took possession of all the missing man's effects. Gradually the hue and cry dwindled, died.

CHAPTER V.

FAITH AND UNFAITH.

"At last we meet!" cried Tom Peters, while his face lit up in joy. "How *are* you, dear Miss Newell?" Clara greeted him coldly. Her face had an abiding pallor now. Her lover's flight and shame had prostrated her for weeks. Her soul was the arena of contending instincts. Alone of all the world she still believed in Everard's innocence, felt that there was something more than met the eye, divined some devilish mystery behind it all. And yet that damning letter from the anonymous lady shook her sadly. Then, too, there was the deposition of Polly. When she heard

Peters's voice accosting her all her old repugnance resurged. It flashed upon her that this man—Roxdal's boon companion—must know far more than he had told to the police. She remembered how Everard had spoken of him, with what affection and confidence! Was it likely he was utterly ignorant of Everard's movements? Mastering her repugnance, she held out her hand. It might be well to keep in touch with him; he was possibly the clue to the mystery. She noticed he was dressed a shade more trimly, and was smoking a meerschaum. He walked along at her side, making no offer to put his pipe out.

"You have not heard from Everard?" he asked. She flushed. "Do you think I'm an accessory after the fact?" she cried.

"No, no," he said soothingly. "Pardon me, I was thinking he might have written—giving no exact address, of course. Men do sometimes dare to write thus to women. But, of course, he knows you too well—you would have put the police on his track."

"Certainly," she exclaimed, indignantly. "Even if he is innocent he must face the charge."

"Do you still entertain the possibility of his innocence?"

"I do," she said boldly, and looked him full in the face. His eyelids drooped with a quiver. "Don't you?"

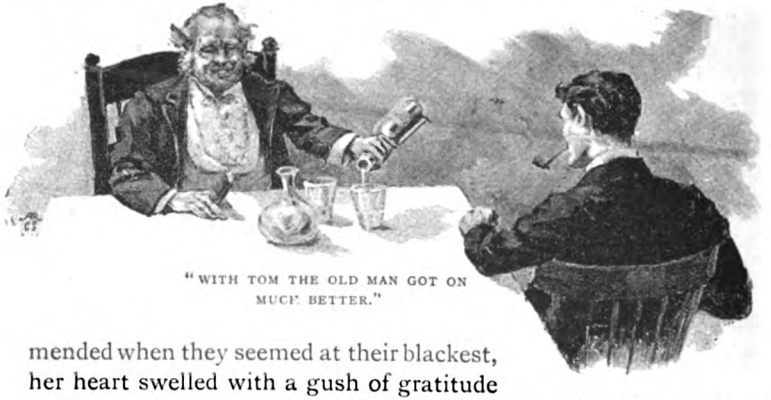
"I have hoped against hope," he replied, in a voice faltering with emotion. "Poor old Everard! But I am afraid there is no room for doubt. Oh, this wicked curse of money—tempting the noblest and the best of us."

"SHE DID NOT REPULSE HIM."

The weeks rolled on. Gradually she found herself seeing more and more of Tom Peters, and gradually, strange to say, he grew less repulsive. From the talks they had together, she began to see that there was really no reason to put faith in Everard; his criminality, his faithlessness, were too flagrant. Gradually she grew ashamed of her early mistrust of Peters; remorse bred esteem, and esteem ultimately ripened into feelings so warm, that when Tom gave freer vent to the love that had been visible to Clara from the first, she did not repulse him.

It is only in books that love lives for ever. Clara, so her father thought, showed herself a sensible girl in plucking out an unworthy affection and casting it from her heart. He invited the

new lover to his house, and took to him at once. Roxdal's somewhat supercilious manner had always jarred upon the unsophisticated corn merchant. With Tom the old man got on much better. While evidently quite as well informed and cultured as his whilom friend, Tom knew how to impart his superior knowledge with the accent on the knowledge rather than on the superiority, while he had the air of gaining much information in return. Those who are most conscious of defects of early education are most resentful of other people sharing their consciousness Moreover, Tom's *bonhomie* was far more to the old fellow' liking than the studied politeness of his predecessor, so that on the whole Tom made more of a conquest of the father than of the daughter. Nevertheless, Clara was by no means unresponsive to Tom's affection, and when, after one of his visits to the house, the old man kissed her fondly and spoke of the happy turn things had taken, and how, for the second time in their lives, things had



"WITH TOM THE OLD MAN GOT ON MUCH BETTER."

mended when they seemed at their blackest, her heart swelled with a gush of gratitude and joy and tenderness, and she fell sobbing into her father's arms.

Tom calculated that he made a clear five hundred a year by occasional journalism, besides possessing some profitable investments which he had inherited from his mother, so that there was no reason for delaying the marriage. It was fixed for May-day, and the honeymoon was to be spent in Italy.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DREAM AND THE AWAKENING.

But Clara was not destined to happiness. From the moment she had promised herself to her first love's friend old memories began to rise up and reproach her. Strange thoughts stirred in

the depths of her soul, and in the silent watches of the night she seemed to hear Everard's accents, charged with grief and upbraiding. Her uneasiness increased as her wedding-day drew near. One night, after a pleasant afternoon spent in being rowed by Tom among the upper reaches of the Thames, she retired to rest full of vague forebodings. And she dreamt a terrible dream. The dripping form of Everard stood by her bedside, staring at her with ghastly eyes. Had he been drowned on the passage to his land of exile? Frozen with horror, she put the question.

"I have never left England!" the vision answered.

Her tongue clove to the roof of her mouth.

"Never left England?" she repeated, in tones which did not seem to be hers.

The wraith's stony eyes stared on, but there was silence.

"Where have you been then?" she asked in her dream.

"Very near you," came the answer.

"There has been foul play then!" she shrieked.

The phantom shook its head in doleful assent.

"I knew it!" she shrieked. "Tom Peters—Tom Peters has done away with you. Is it not he? Speak!"

"Yes, it is he—Tom Peters—whom I loved more than all the world."

Even in the terrible oppression of the dream she could not resist saying, woman-like:

"Did I not warn you against him?"

The phantom stared on silently and made no reply.

"But what was his motive?" she asked at length.

"Love of gold—and you. And you are giving yourself to him," it said sternly.

"No, no, Everard! I will not! I will not! I swear it! Forgive me!"

The spirit shook its head sceptically.

"You love him. Women are false—as false as men."

She strove to protest again, but her tongue refused its office.

"If you marry him, I shall always be with you! Beware!"

The dripping figure vanished as suddenly as it came, and Clara awoke in a cold perspiration. Oh, it was horrible! The man she had learnt to love, the murderer of the man she had learnt to forget! How her original prejudice had been justified! Distracted, shaken to her depths, she would not take counsel even of her father, but informed the police of her suspicions. A raid was made on Tom's rooms, and lo! the stolen notes were discovered in a huge bundle.

It was found that he had several banking accounts, with a large, recently-paid amount in each bank. Tom was arrested. Attention was now concentrated on the corpses washed up by the river. It was not long before the body of Roxdal came to shore, the face distorted almost beyond recognition by long immersion, but the clothes patently his, and a pocket-book in the breast-pocket removing the last doubt. Mrs. Seacon and Polly and Clara Newell all identified the body. Both juries returned a verdict of murder against Tom Peters, the recital of Clara's dream producing a unique impression in the court and throughout the country. The theory of the prosecution was that Roxdal had brought home the money, whether to fly alone or to divide it, or

"IDENTIFIED THE BODY."

whether even for some innocent purpose, as Clara believed, was immaterial. That Peters determined to have it all, that he had gone out for a walk with the deceased, and, taking advantage of the fog, had pushed him into the river, and that he was further impelled to the crime by love for Clara Newell, as was evident from his subsequent relations with her. The judge put on the black cap. Tom Peters was duly hung by the neck till he was dead.

CHAPTER VII.

BRIEF RÉSUMÉ OF THE CULPRIT'S CONFESSION.

When you all read this I shall be dead and laughing at you. I have been hung for my own murder. I am Everard G. Roxdal. I am also Tom Peters. We two were one. When I was a young man my moustache and beard wouldn't come. I bought false ones to improve my appearance. One day, after I had become manager of the City and Suburban Bank, I took off my beard and moustache at home, and then the thought crossed my mind that nobody would know me without them. I was another man. Instantly it flashed upon me that if I ran away from the Bank, that other man could be left in London, while the police were scouring the world for a non-existent fugitive. But this was only the crude germ of the idea. Slowly I matured my plan. The man who was going to be left in London must be known to a circle of acquaintance beforehand. It would be easy enough to masquerade in the evenings in my beardless condition, with other disguises of dress and voice. But this was not brilliant enough. I conceived the idea of living with him. It was Box and Cox reversed. We shared rooms at Mrs. Seacon's. It was a great strain, but it was only for a few weeks. I had trick clothes in my bedroom like those of quick-change artistes; in a moment I could pass from Roxdal to Peters and from Peters to Roxdal. Polly had to clean two pairs of boots a morning, cook two dinners, &c., &c. She and Mrs. Seacon saw one or the other of us every moment; it never dawned upon them they never saw us *both together*. At meals I would not be interrupted, ate off two plates, and conversed with my friend in loud tones. At other times we dined at different hours. On Sundays he was supposed to be asleep when I was in church. There is no landlady in the world to whom the idea would have occurred that one man was troubling himself to be two (and to pay for two, including washing). I worked up the idea of Roxdal's flight, asked Polly to go with me, manufactured that feminine letter that arrived on the morning of my disappearance. As Tom Peters I mixed with a journalistic set. I had another room where I kept the gold and notes till I mistakenly thought the thing had blown over. Unfortunately, returning from here on the night of my disappearance, with Roxdal's clothes in a bundle I intended to drop into the river, it was stolen from me in the fog, and the man into whose possession it ultimately came appears to have committed suicide. What, perhaps, ruined

me was my desire to keep Clara's love, and to transfer it to the survivor. Everard told her I was the best of fellows. Once married to her, I would not have had much fear. Even if she had discovered the trick, a wife cannot give evidence against her husband, and often does not want to. I made none of the usual slips, but no man can guard against a girl's nightmare after a day up the river and a supper at the Star and Garter. I might have told the judge he was an ass, but then I should have had penal servitude for bank robbery, and that is worse than death. The only thing that puzzles me, though, is whether the law has committed murder or I suicide.

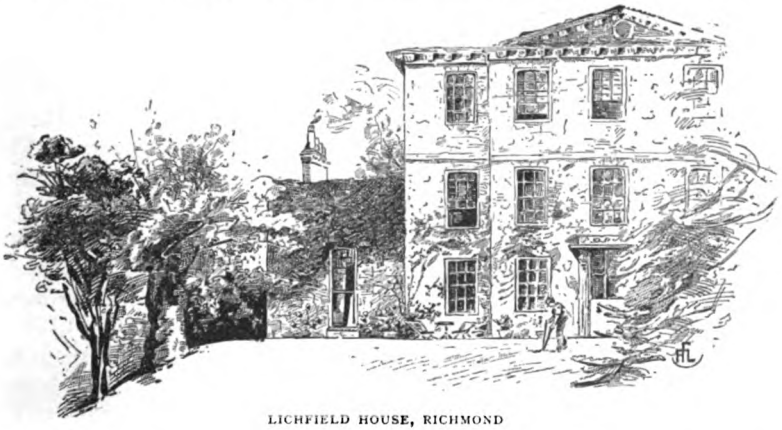
My First Novel.

THE TRAIL OF THE SERPENT.

By Miss M. E. Braddon.

Illustrations by Miss F. L. Fuller.

MY first novel! Far back in the distinctness of childish memories I see a little girl who has lately learnt to write, who has lately been given a beautiful brand new mahogany desk, with a red velvet slope, and a glass ink bottle, such a desk as might now be bought for three and sixpence, but which in the forties cost at least half-a-guinea. Very proud is the little girl, with the Kenwigs pigtails, and the Kenwigs frills, of that



LICHFIELD HOUSE, RICHMOND

mahogany desk, and its infinite capacities for literary labour, above all, gem of gems, its stick of variegated sealing-wax, brown, speckled with gold, and its little glass seal with an intaglio representing two doves—Pliny's doves perhaps, famous in mosaic, only the little girl had never heard of Pliny, or his Laurentine Villa.

Armed with that desk and its supply of stationery, Mary Elizabeth Braddon—very fond of writing her name at full-length, and her address also at full-length, though the word "Middlesex" offered difficulties—began that pilgrimage on the broad high road

of fiction, which was destined to be a longish one. So much for the little girl of eight years old, in the third person, and now to become strictly autobiographical.

My first story was based on those fairy tales which first opened to me the world of imaginative literature. My first attempt in fiction, and in round-hand, on carefully pencilled double lines, was a story of two sisters, a good sister and a wicked, and I fear adhered more faithfully to the lines of the archetypal story than the writer's pen kept to the double fence which should have ensured neatness.

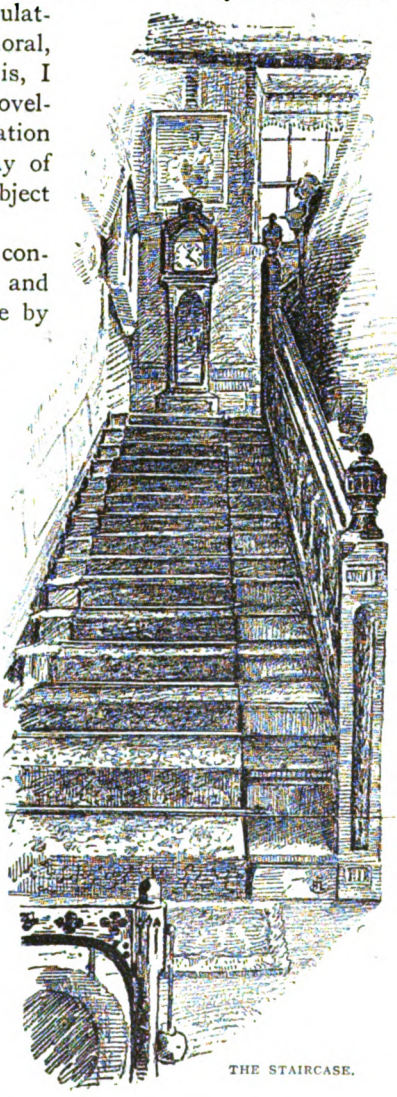
THE HALL.

The interval between the ages of eight and twelve was a prolific period, fertile in unfinished MSS., among which I can now trace a historical novel on the Siege of Calais—an Eastern story, suggested by a passionate love of Miss Pardoe's Turkish tales, and Byron's "Bride of Abydos," which my mother, a devoted Byron worshipper, allowed me to read aloud to her—and doubtless murder in the reading—a story of the Hartz Mountains, with audacious flights in German diablerie; and lastly, very seriously undertaken, and very perseveringly worked upon, a domestic story, the outline of which was suggested by the same dear and sympathetic mother.

Now it is a curious fact, which may or may not be common to other story-spinners, that I have never been able to take kindly to a plot—or the suggestion of a plot—offered to me by anybody else. The moment a friend tells me that he or she is desirous of imparting a series of facts—strictly true—as if truth in fiction mattered one jot!—which in his or her opinion would make the ground plan of an admirable, startling, and altogether original three-volume novel, I know in advance that my imagination will never grapple with those startling circumstances—that my thoughts will begin to wander before my friend has got half through the remarkable chain of events, and that if the obliging purveyor of romantic incidents were to examine me at the

end of the story, I should be spun ignominiously. For the most part, such subjects as have been proposed to me by friends have been hopelessly unfit for the circulating library; or, where not immoral, have been utterly dull; but it is, I believe, a fixed idea in the novel-reader's mind that any combination of events out of the beaten way of life will make an admirable subject for the novelist's art.

My dear mother, taking into consideration my tender years, and perhaps influenced in somewise by her own love of picking up odd bits of Sheraton or Chippendale furniture in the storehouses of the less ambitious second-hand dealers of those simpler days, offered me the following *scenario* for a domestic story. It was an incident which, I doubt not, she had often read at the tail of a newspaper column, and which certainly savours of the gigantic gooseberry, the sea-serpent, and the agricultural labourer who unexpectedly inherits half-a-million. It was eminently a Simple Story, and far more worthy of that title than Mrs. Inchbald's long and involved romance.

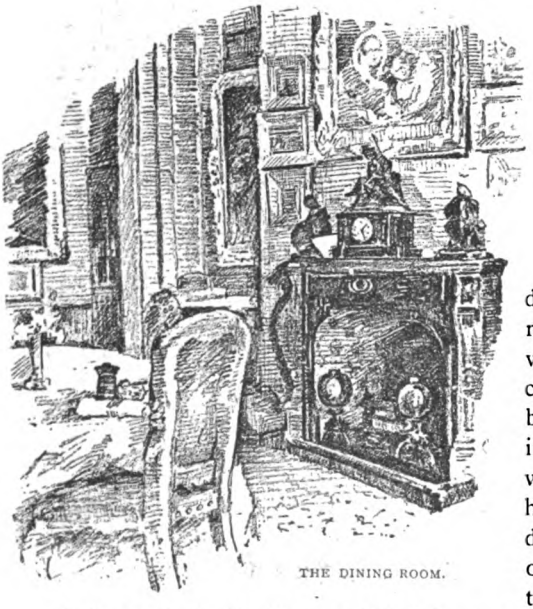


THE STAIRCASE.

An honest couple, in humble circumstances, possess among their small household gear a good old easy chair, which has been the pride of a former generation, and is the choicest of their household gods. A comfortable cushioned chair, snug and restful, albeit the chintz covering, though clean and tidy, as virtuous people's furniture always is in fiction, is worn thin by long service, while the dear

chair itself is no longer the chair it once was as to legs and framework.

Evil days come upon the praiseworthy couple and their dependent brood, among whom I faintly remember the love interest of the story to have lain; and that direful day arrives when the average landlord of juvenile fiction, whose heart is of adamant and brain of brass, distrains for the rent. The rude broker swoops upon the humble dovecot; a cart or hand-barrow waits on the carefully hearth-stoned door-step for the household gods; the family gather round the cherished chair, on which the rude broker has already laid his grimy fingers; they hang over the back and fondle the padded arms; and the old grandmother, with clasped hands, entreats that, if able to raise the money in a few days, they may be allowed to buy back that loved heirloom.



THE DINING ROOM.

The broker laughs the plea to scorn; they might have their chair, and cheap enough, he had no doubt. The cover was darned and patched—as only the virtuous poor of fiction do darn and do patch—and he made no doubt the stuffing was nothing better than brown wool; and with that coarse taunt the coarser broker dug his clasp-knife into the cushion against which grandfatherly backs had leaned in happier days, and lo! an avalanche of banknotes fell out of the much-maligned horse-hair, and the family was lifted from penury to wealth. Nothing more simple—or more natural. A prudent but eccentric ancestor had chosen this mode of putting by his savings, assured that, whenever discovered, the money would be useful to—somebody.

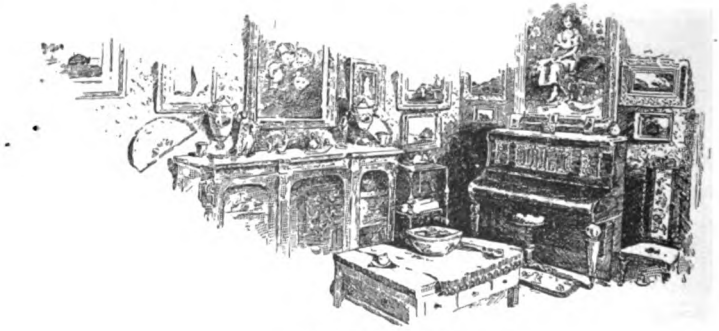
So ran the *scenario:* but I fancy my juvenile pen hardly held on to the climax. My brief experience of boarding school occurred at this time, and I well remember writing "The Old Arm Chair"

in a penny account book, in the schoolroom of Cresswell Lodge, and that I was both surprised and offended at the laughter of the kindly music-teacher who, coming into the room to summon a pupil, and seeing me gravely occupied, enquired what I was doing, and was intensely amused at my stolid method of composition, plodding on undisturbed by the voices and occupations of the older girls around me. "The Old Arm Chair" was certainly my first serious, painstaking effort in fiction; but as it was abandoned unfinished before my eleventh birthday, and as no line thereof ever achieved the distinction of type, it can hardly rank as my first novel.

THE DRAWING-ROOM.

There came a very few years later the sentimental period, in which my unfinished novels assumed a more ambitious form, and were modelled chiefly upon Jane Eyre, with occasional tentative imitations of Thackeray. Stories of gentle hearts that loved in vain, always ending in renunciation. One romance there was, I well remember, begun with resolute purpose, after the first reading of Esmond, and in the endeavour to give life and local colour

to a story of the Restoration period, a brilliantly wicked interval in the social history of England, which, after the lapse of thirty years, I am still as bent upon taking for the background of a love story as I was when I began "Master Anthony's Record" in Esmondese, and made my girlish acquaintance with the Reading-room of the British Museum, where I went in quest of local colour, and where much kindness was shown to my youth and inexperience of the book world. Poring over a folio edition of the State Trials at my uncle's quiet rectory in sleepy Sandwich, I had discovered the passionate romantic story of Lord Grey's elopement with his sister-in-law, next in sequence to the trial of Lawrence Braddon and Hugh Speke for conspiracy. At the risk of seeming disloyal to my own race, I must add that it seemed to me a very tinpot order of plot to which these two learned gentlemen bent their

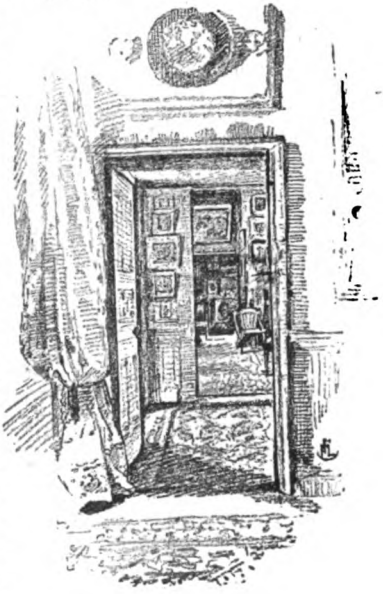


THE EVENING ROOM.

legal minds, and which cost the Braddon family a heavy fine in land near Camelford—confiscation which I have heard my father complain of as especially unfair—Lawrence being a younger son. The romantic story of Lord Grey was to be the subject of "Master Anthony's Record," but Master Anthony's sentimental autobiography went the way of all my earlier efforts. It was but a year or so after the collapse of Master Anthony, that a blindly-enterprising printer of Beverley, who had seen my poor little verses in the *Beverley Recorder*, made me the spirited offer of ten pounds for a serial story, to be set up and printed at Beverley, and published on commission by a London firm in Warwick Lane. I cannot picture to myself, in my after-knowledge of the bookselling trade, any enterprise more futile in its inception

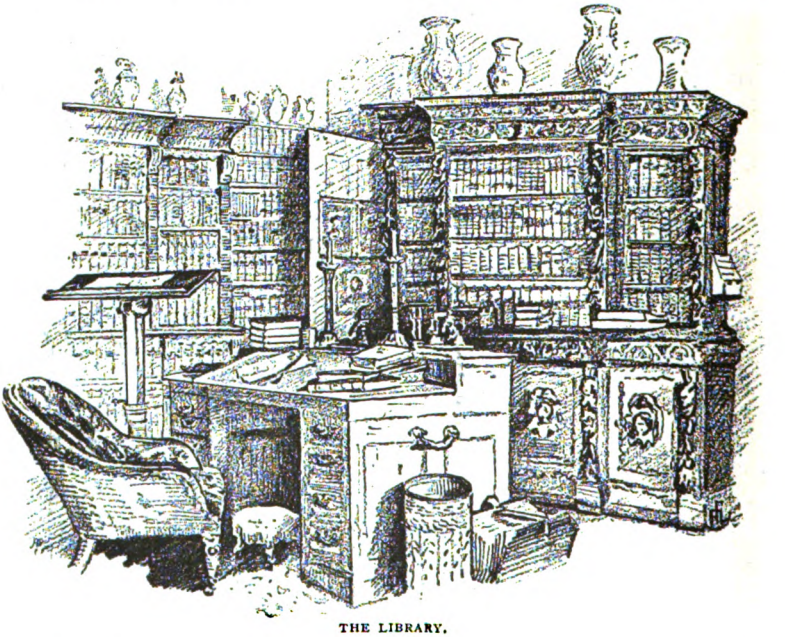
or more feeble in its execution; but to my youthful ambition the actual commission to write a novel, with an advance payment of fifty shillings to show good faith on the part of my Yorkshire speculator, seemed like the opening of that pen-and-ink paradise which I had sighed for ever since I could hold a pen. I had, previously to this date, found a Mæcenas in Beverley, in the person of a learned gentleman who volunteered to foster my love of the Muses by buying the copyright of a volume of poems and publishing the same at his own expense—which he did, poor man, without stint, and by which noble patronage of Poet's Corner verse, he must have lost money. He had, however, the privilege of dictating the subject of the principal poem, which was to sing —however feebly—Garibaldi's Sicilian campaign.

The Beverley printer suggested that my Warwick Lane serial should combine, as far as my powers allowed, the human interest and genial humour of Dickens with the plot-weaving of G. W. R. Reynolds; and, furnished with these broad instructions, I filled my ink bottle, spread out my foolscap, and, on a hopelessly wet afternoon, began my first novel—now known as "The Trail of the Serpent" —but published in Warwick Lane, and later in the stirring High Street of Beverley, as "Three Times Dead." In "Three Times Dead" I gave loose to all my leanings to the violent in melodrama. Death stalked in ghastliest form across my pages; and villainy reigned triumphant till the Nemesis of the last chapter. I wrote with all the freedom of one who feared not the face of a critic; and, indeed, thanks to the obscurity of its original production, and its re-issue as the ordinary two-shilling railway novel, this first novel of mine has almost entirely escaped the critical lash, and has pursued its way as a chartered libertine. People buy it and read it, and its faults and follies are forgiven as the exuberances of a pen unchastened by experience; but faster and more facile at that initial stage than it ever became after long practice.



THE SMOKING-ROOM.

I dashed headlong at my work, conjured up my images of horror or of mirth, and boldly built the framework of my story, and set my puppets moving. To me, at least, they were living creatures, who seemed to follow impulses of their own, to be impelled by their own passions, to love and hate, and plot and scheme of their own accord. There was unalloyed pleasure in the composition of that first story, and the knowledge that it was to be actually printed and published, and not to be declined with thanks by adamantine magazine editors, like a certain short story which I had lately written, and which contained the germ of "Lady Audley's Secret." Indeed, at this period of my life, the



THE LIBRARY.

postman's knock had become associated in my mind with the sharp sound of a rejected MS. dropping through the open letter-box on to the floor of the hall, while my heart seemed to drop in sympathy with that book-post packet.

Short of never being printed at all, my Beverley-born novel could have hardly entered upon the world of books in a more profound obscurity. That one living creature ever bought a number of "Three Times Dead" I greatly doubt. I can recall

the thrill of emotion with which I tore open the envelope that contained my complimentary copy of the first number, folded across, and in aspect inferior to a gratis pamphlet about a patent medicine. The miserable little wood block which illustrated that first number would have disgraced a baker's whitey-brown bag, would have been unworthy to illustrate a penny bun. My spirits were certainly dashed at the technical shortcomings of that first serial, and I was hardly surprised when I was informed a few weeks later, that although my admirers at Beverley were deeply interested in the story, it was not a financial success, and that it would be only obliging on my part, and in accordance with my known kindness of heart, if I were to restrict the development of the romance to half its intended length, and to accept five pounds in lieu of ten as my reward. Having no desire that the rash Beverley printer should squander his own or his children's fortune in the obscurity of Warwick Lane, I immediately acceded to his request, shortened sail, and went on with my story, perhaps with a shade less enthusiasm, having seen the shabby figure it was to make in the book world. I may add that the Beverley publisher's payments began and ended with his noble advance of fifty shillings. The balance was never paid; and it was rather hard lines that, on his becoming bankrupt in his poor little way a few years later, a judge in the Bankruptcy Court remarked that, as Miss Braddon was now making a good deal of money by her pen, she ought to "come to the relief" of her first publisher.

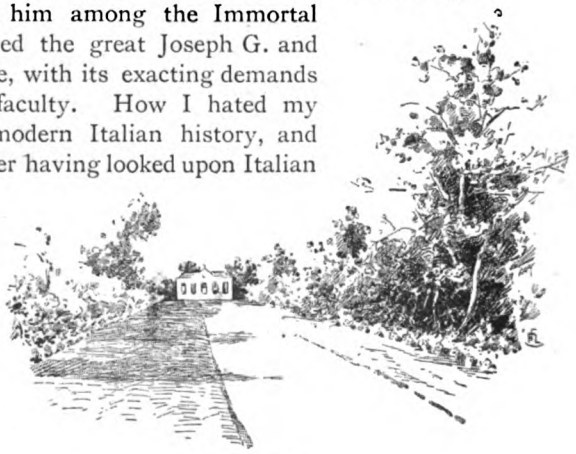
MISS BRADDON'S FAVOURITE MARE.

And now my volume of verses being well under weigh, I went with my mother to farm-house lodgings in the neighbourhood of that very Beverley, where I spent, perhaps, the happiest half-year of my life—half a year of tranquil, studious days, far from the madding crowd, with the mother whose society was always all sufficient for me—half a year among level pastures, with unlimited books from the library in Hull, an old farm-horse to ride about the green lanes, the breath of summer, with all

its sweet odours of flower and herb, around and about us: half a year of unalloyed bliss, had it not been for one dark shadow, the heroic figure of Garibaldi, the sailor-soldier, looming large upon the foreground of my literary labours, as the hero of a lengthy narrative poem in the Spenserian metre.

My chief business at Beverley was to complete the volume of verse commissioned by my Yorkshire Mæcenas, at that time a very rich man, who paid me a much better price for my literary work than his townsman, the enterprising printer, and who had the first claim on my thought and time.

With the business-like punctuality of a salaried clerk, I went every morning to my file of the *Times*, and pored and puzzled over Neapolitan revolution and Sicilian campaign, and I can only say that if Emile Zola has suffered as much over Sedan as I suffered in the freshness of my youth, when flowery meadows and the old chestnut mare invited to summer idlesse, over the fighting in Sicily, his dogged perseverance in uncongenial labour should place him among the Immortal Forty. How I hated the great Joseph G. and the Spenserian metre, with its exacting demands upon the rhyming faculty. How I hated my own ignorance of modern Italian history, and my own eyes for never having looked upon Italian landscape, whereby historical allusion and local colour were both wanting to that dry-as-dust record of heroic endeavour. I had only the *Times* correspondent; where he was picturesque I could be picturesque—allowing always for the Spenserian straining—where he was rich in local colour I did my utmost to reproduce his colouring, stretched always on the Spenserian rack, and lengthened out by the bitter necessity of finding triple rhymes. Next to Guiseppe Garibaldi I hated Edmund Spenser, and it may be from a vengeful remembrance of those early struggles with a difficult form of versification, that, although throughout my literary life I have been a lover of England's earlier poet, and have delighted



THE ORANGERY.

in the quaintness and *naïveté* of Chaucer, I have refrained from reading more than a casual stanza or two of the "Faëry Queen." When I lived at Beverley, Spenser was to me but a name, and Byron's "Childe Harold" was my only model for that exacting verse. I should add that the Beverley Mæcenas, when commissioning this volume of verse, was less superb in his ideas than the literary patron of the past. He looked at the matter from a purely commercial standpoint, and believed that a volume of verse, such as I could produce, would pay—a delusion on his part which I honestly strove to combat before accepting his handsome offer of remuneration for my time and labour. It was with this idea in his mind that he chose and insisted upon the Sicilian Campaign as a subject for my muse, and thus started me heavily handicapped on the racecourse of Parnassus.

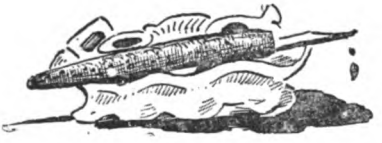
MISS BRADDON'S COTTAGE AT LYNDHURST.

The weekly number of "Three Times Dead" was "thrown off" in brief intervals of rest from my *magnum opus*, and it was an infinite relief to turn from Garibaldi and his brothers in arms to the angels and the monsters which my own brain had engendered, and which to me seemed more alive than the good great man whose arms I so laboriously sang. My rustic pipe far better loved to sing of melodramatic poisoners and ubiquitous detectives; of fine houses in the West of London, and dark dens in the East. So the weekly chapter of my first novel ran merrily off my pen while the printer's boy waited in the farm-house kitchen.

Happy, happy days, so near to memory, and yet so far. In that peaceful summer I finished my first novel, knocked Garibaldi on the head with a closing rhapsody, saw the York spring and summer races in hopelessly wet weather, learnt to love the Yorkshire people, and left Yorkshire almost broken-heartedly on a dull.

gray October morning, to travel Londonwards through a landscape that was mostly under water.

And, behold, since that October morning I have written fifty-three novels; I have lost dear old friends and found new friends, who are also dear, but I have never looked on a Yorkshire landscape since I turned my reluctant eyes from those level meadows and green lanes where the old chestnut mare used to carry me ploddingly to and fro between tall, tangled hedges of eglantine and honeysuckle.



MISS BRADDON'S INKSTAND.

Novel Notes.

By Jerome K. Jerome.

Illustrations by J. Gülich and J. Greig.

PART X.

THE final question discussed at our last meeting had been: What shall our hero be? MacShaugnassy had suggested an author, with a critic for the villain. Brown's fancy was an artist. My idea was a stockbroker, with an undercurrent of romance in his nature. Said Jephson, who has a practical mind, approaching at times the commercial: "The question is not what we like, but what the female novel-reader likes."

"That is so," agreed MacShaugnassy. "I propose that we collect feminine opinion upon this point. I will write to my aunt, and get from her the old lady's view. You," he said, turning to me, "can put the case to your wife, and get the young lady's ideal. Let Brown write to his sister at Newnham, and find out whom the intellectual maiden favours, while Jephson can learn from Miss Medbury what is most attractive to the common-sensed girl."

"THE DISCUSSION AT OUR LAST MEETING."

This plan we had adopted, and the result was now under consideration. MacShaugnassy opened the proceedings by reading his aunt's letter. Wrote the old lady:

"I think, if I were you, my dear boy, I should choose a soldier. You know your poor grandfather, who ran away to America with that *wicked* Mrs. Featherly, the banker's wife, was a soldier, and so was your poor cousin Robert, who lost eight thousand pounds at Monte Carlo. I have always felt singularly drawn towards soldiers, even as a girl; though your poor dear uncle could not bear them. You will find many allusions to soldiers and men of war in the Old Testament (see Jer. 48, 14). Of course one does not like to think of their fighting and killing each other, but then they do not seem to do much of that sort of thing nowadays."

BROWN READ AS FOLLOWS."

"So much for the old lady," said MacShaugnassy, as he folded up the letter and returned it to his pocket. "What says culture?"

Brown produced from his cigar-case a letter addressed in a bold round hand, and read as follows:

"What a curious coincidence! A few of us were discussing this very subject last night in Millicent Hightopper's rooms, and I may tell you at once that our decision was unanimous in favour of soldiers. You see, my dear Selkirk, in human nature the attraction is towards the opposite. To a milliner's apprentice a poet would no doubt be satisfying; to a woman of intelligence he would be an unutterable bore. The man of brain is not for the woman of brain. What the intellectual woman requires in man is not something to argue with, but something to look at. To an empty-headed woman I can imagine the soldier type proving vapid and uninteresting; to the woman of mind he represents her ideal of man—a creature strong, handsome, well-dressed, and not too clever."

"That gives us two votes for the army," remarked MacShaugnassy, as Brown tore his sister's letter in two, and threw the pieces into the waste-paper basket. "What says the common-sensed girl?"

"First catch your common-sensed girl," muttered Jephson, a little grumpily, as it seemed to me. "Where do you propose finding her?"

"Well," returned MacShaugnassy, "I looked to find her in Miss Medbury."

As a rule, the mention of Miss Medbury's name brings a flush of joy to Jephson's face; but now his features wore an expression distinctly approaching a scowl.

"Oh!" he replied, "did you? Well, then, the common-sensed girl loves the military, also."

"By Jove!" exclaimed MacShaugnassy, "what an extraordinary thing. What reason does she give?"

"That they look so nice when they're dressed, and that they dance so divinely," answered Jephson, shortly.

"Well, you do surprise me," murmured MacShaugnassy, "I am astonished."

Then to me he said: "And what does the young married woman say? The same?"

"Yes," I replied, "precisely the same."

"Does *she* give a reason?" he asked.

"Oh, yes," I explained; "because you can't help liking them."

There was silence for the next few minutes, while we smoked and thought. I fancy we were all wishing we had never started this enquiry.

That four distinctly different types of educated womanhood should, with promptness and unanimity quite unfeminine, have selected the soldier as their ideal, was certainly discouraging to the civilian heart. Had they been nursemaids or servant girls, I should have expected it. The worship of Mars by the Venus of the white cap is one of the few vital religions left to this devoutless age. A year or two ago I lodged near a barracks, and the sight to be seen round its huge iron gates on Sunday afternoons I shall never forget. The girls began to assemble about twelve o'clock. By two, at which hour the army, with its hair nicely oiled and a cane in its hand, was ready for a stroll, there would be some four or five hundred of them waiting in a line. Formerly they had collected in a wild mob, and as the soldiers were let out to them two at a time, had fought for them, as lions for early Christians. This, however, had led to scenes of such disorder and brutality, that the police had been obliged to interfere; and the girls were now marshalled in *queue*, two abreast, and compelled, by a force of constables specially told off for the purpose, to keep their places and wait their proper turn.

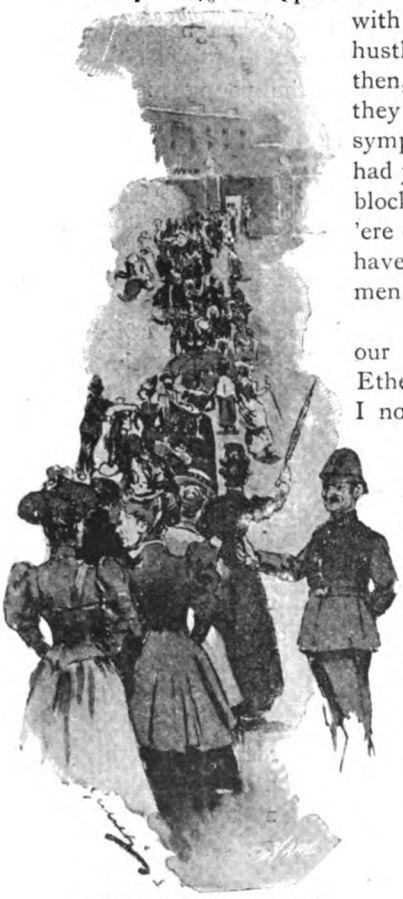
At three o'clock the sentry on duty would come down to the wicket and close it. "They're all gone, my dears," he would shout out to the girls still left; "it's no good your stopping, we've no more for you to-day."

"Oh, not one!" some poor child would murmur pleadingly, while the tears welled up into her big round eyes, "not even a little one. I've been waiting *such* a long time."

"Can't help that," the honest fellow would reply, gruffly, but not unkindly, turning aside to hide his emotion; "you've had 'em

all between you. We don't make 'em, you know: you can't have 'em if we haven't got 'em, can you? Come earlier next time."

Then he would hurry away to escape further importunity; and the police, who appeared to have been waiting for this moment with gloating anticipation, would jeeringly hustle away the weeping remnant. "Now then, pass along, you girls, pass along," they would say, in that irritatingly unsympathetic voice of theirs. "You've had your chance. Can't have the roadway blocked up all the afternoon with this 'ere demonstration of the unloved. You'll have to put up with your ordinary young men for to-day. Pass along."



"NOW THEN, PASS ALONG."

In connection with this same barracks, our charwoman told Amenda, who told Ethelbertha, who told me a story, which I now told the boys.

Into a certain house, in a certain street in the neighbourhood, there moved one day a certain family. Their servant had left them—most of their servants did at the end of a week—and the day after the moving-in an advertisement was drawn up and sent to the *Chronicle* for a domestic. It ran thus:

WANTED, GENERAL SERVANT, in small family of eleven. Wages, £6; no beer money. Must be early riser and hard worker. Washing done at home. Must be good cook, and not object to window-cleaning. Unitarian preferred.—Apply, with references, to A. B., &c.

That advertisement was sent off on Wednesday afternoon. At seven o'clock on Thursday morning the whole family were awakened by continuous ringing of the street door bell. The husband, looking out of window, was surprised to see a crowd of about fifty girls surrounding the house. He slipped on his dressing-gown and went down to see what was the matter. The moment he opened the door, fifteen of them charged tumul-

tuously into the passage, sweeping him completely off his legs. Once inside, these fifteen faced round, fought the other thirty-five or so back on to the door-step, and slammed the door in their faces. Then they picked up the master of the house, and asked him politely to conduct them to "A. B."

"SURPRISED TO SEE ABOUT FIFTY GIRLS."

At first, owing to the clamour of the mob outside, who were hammering at the door and shouting curses through the keyhole on those inside, he was too confused to understand anything, but by dint of great exertion they succeeded at length in explaining to him that they were domestic servants come in answer to his wife's advertisement. The man went and told his wife, and his wife said she would see them, one at a time.

Which one should have audience first was a delicate question to decide. The man, on being appealed to, said he would prefer to leave it to them. They accordingly discussed the matter among themselves. At the end of a quarter of an hour, the victor, having borrowed a packet of pins and a looking-glass from our charwoman, who had slept in the house, went upstairs, while the remaining fourteen sat down in the hall, and fanned themselves with their bonnets.

"A. B." was a good deal astonished when the first applicant presented herself. She was a tall, genteel-looking, well-dressed girl. Up to yesterday she had been head housemaid at Lady Stanton's, and before that she had been under-cook for two years to the Duchess of York.

"And why did you leave Lady Stanton?" asked "A. B."

"To come here, mum," replied the girl.

The lady was puzzled.

"And you'll be satisfied with six pounds a year?' she asked.

"Certainly, mum, I think it ample."

"And you don't mind hard work?"

"I love it, mum."

"And you're an early riser?"

"Oh yes, mum, it upsets me stopping in bed after half-past five."

"You know we do the washing at home?"

"Yes, mum. I think it so much better to do it at home. Those laundries ruin good clothes. They're so careless."

"Are you a Unitarian?" continued the lady.

"Not yet, mum," replied the girl, "but I should like to be one."

The lady took her reference, and said she would write her.

"I do hope you will give me a trial, mum," pleaded the girl, as she rose to go; "I would try so hard to give you satisfaction."

The next applicant offered to come for three pounds—thought six pounds too much. She also expressed her willingness to sleep in the back kitchen: a shakedown under the sink was all she wanted. She likewise had yearnings towards Unitarianism.

"—MET THE NEXT DOOR LADY ON THE DOOR-STEP."

The third girl did not require any wages at all—could not understand what servants wanted with wages—thought wages only encouraged a love of foolish finery—thought a comfortable home in a Unitarian family ought to be sufficient wages for any girl.

This girl said there was one stipulation she should like to make, and that was that she should be allowed to pay for all breakages caused by her own carelessness or neglect. She objected to holidays and evenings out on principle; she held that they distracted a girl from her work.

The fourth candidate offered a premium of five pounds for the place; and then "A. B." began to get frightened, and refused to see any more of the girls, convinced that they must be lunatics from some neighbouring asylum out for a walk.

Later in the day, meeting the next door lady on the door-step, she related her morning's experiences.

"Oh, that's nothing extraordinary," said the next door

lady; "none of us on this side of the street pay wages; and we get the pick of all the best servants in London. Why, girls will come from the other end of the kingdom to get into one of these houses. It's the dream of their lives. They save up for years, so as to be able to come here for nothing."

"What's the attraction?" asked "A. B.," more amazed than ever.

"Why, don't you see," explained the next door lady, "our back windows open upon the barrack yard. A girl living in one of these houses is always close to soldiers. By looking out of window she can always see soldiers; and sometimes a soldier will nod to her, or even call up to her. They never dream of asking for wages. They'll work eighteen hours a day, and put up with anything just to be allowed to stop."

"A SOLDIER'S ARM ROUND HER WAIST."

"A. B." profited by this information, and engaged the girl who offered the five pounds premium. She found her a perfect treasure of a servant. She was invariably willing and respectful, slept on a sofa in the kitchen, and was always contented with an egg for her dinner.

The truth of this story I cannot vouch for. Myself, I can believe it. Brown and MacShaugnassy made no attempt to do so, which seemed unfriendly. Jephson excused himself on the plea of a headache. I admit there are points in it presenting difficulties to the average intellect. As I explained at the commencement, it was told to me by Ethelbertha, who had it from Amenda, who got it from the charwoman, and exaggerations may have crept into it. The following, however, were incidents that came

under my own personal observation. They afforded a still stronger example of the influence exercised by Tommy Atkins upon the British domestic, and I therefore thought it right to relate them also to the boys.

"The heroine of them," I said, "is our Amenda. Now, you would call her a tolerably well-behaved, orderly young woman, would you not?"

"She is my ideal of unostentatious respectability," answered MacShaugnassy.

"That was my opinion also," I replied. "You can, therefore, imagine my feelings on passing her one evening in the Folkestone High Street with a Panama hat upon her head (my Panama hat), and a soldier's arm round her waist. She was one of a mob, composed of all the unoccupied riff-raff of Folkestone, who were following the band of the Third Berkshire Infantry, then in camp at Sandgate. There was an ecstatic, far-away look in her eyes. She was dancing rather than walking, and with her left hand she beat time to the music."

"AND HUNG MY HAT UP."

"I should say you were suffering from a mild attack of D.T. when you saw all that," said MacShaugnassy.

"So I might have thought myself," I said; "but Ethelbertha was with me at the time, and she saw it too. We stared after the procession until it had turned the corner, and then we stared at each other.

"'Oh, it's impossible,' said Ethelbertha to me.

"'But that was my hat,' I said to Ethelbertha.

"The moment we reached home Ethelbertha looked for Amenda, and I looked for my hat. Neither were to be found.

"Nine o'clock struck, ten o'clock struck. At half-past ten, we went down and got our own supper, and had it in the kitchen. At a quarter-past eleven, Amenda returned. She walked into the kitchen without a word, hung my hat up behind the door, and commenced clearing away the supper things.

"Ethelbertha rose, calm but severe.

"'Where have you been, Amenda?' she enquired.

"'Gadding half over the county with a lot of low soldiers,' answered Amenda, continuing her work.

"'You had on my hat,' I added, somewhat gloomily. It was not the right view to take of the case, I know, but, personally, that fact grieved me more than all the other incidents in the proceeding put together, sad though I felt these to be. It was an expensive hat, and Ethelbertha said it suited me (there are not many that do). After seeing it that night on Amenda's head, my pride in it was gone.

"'Yes, sir,' replied Amenda, still continuing her work, 'it was the first thing that came to hand. What I'm thankful for is that it wasn't missis's best bonnet.'

"Whether Ethelbertha was mollified by the proper spirit displayed in this last remark, I cannot say, but I think it probable. At all events, it was in a voice more of sorrow than of anger that she resumed her examination.

"'You were walking with a soldier's arm around your waist when we passed you, Amenda?' she observed interrogatively.

"'I know, mum,' admitted Amenda, 'I found it there myself when the music stopped.'

"Ethelbertha looked her enquiries. Amenda filled a saucepan with water, and then replied to them.

"'I'm a disgrace to a decent household,' she said; 'no mistress who respected herself would keep me a moment. I ought to be put out on the doorstep with my box and a month's wages.'

"'But why did you do it then?' said Ethelbertha, with natural astonishment.

"'Because I'm a helpless ninny, mum.' There was no trace of bitterness or passion in Amenda's tones. She spoke in the calm, even voice of a person stating facts.

"'I can't help myself,' she went on; 'if I see soldiers I'm bound to follow them. It runs in our family. My poor cousin Emma was just such another fool. She was engaged to be married to a quiet, respectable young fellow with a shop of his own, and three days before the wedding she ran off with a regiment of marines and married the colour-sergeant. That's what I shall end by doing. I've been all the way to Sandgate with that lot you saw me with, and I've kissed four of them—the nasty wretches. I'm a nice sort of girl to be walking out with a respectable milkman.'

"She was so deeply disgusted with herself that it seemed superfluous for anybody else to be indignant with her; and Ethelbertha changed her tone and tried to comfort her.

"'Oh, you'll get over all that nonsense, Amenda,' she said, laughingly; 'you see yourself how silly it is. You must tell Mr. Bowles to keep you away from soldiers.'

"'Ah, I can't look at it in the same light way that you do, mum,' returned Amenda, somewhat reprovingly; 'a girl that can't see a bit of red marching down the street without wanting to rush out and follow it ain't fit to be anybody's wife. Why I should be leaving the shop with nobody in it about twice a week, and he'd have to go the round of all the barracks in London, looking for me. I shall save up and get myself into a lunatic asylum, that's what I shall do.'

"Ethelbertha began to grow quite troubled. 'But surely this is something altogether new, Amenda,' she said; 'you must have often met soldiers when you've been out in London?'

"'Oh, yes, one or two at a time, walking about anyhow, I can stand that all right. It's when there's a lot of them all together with a band that I lose my head.'

"'WHEN THERE'S A LOT OF THEM WITH A BAND, I LOSE MY HEAD.'"

"'You don't know what it's like, mum,' she added, noticing Ethelbertha's puzzled expression; 'you've never had it. I only hope you never may.'

"We kept a careful watch over Amenda during the remainder of our stay at Folkestone, and an anxious time we had of it. Every day some regiment or other would march through the town, and at the first sound of its music Amenda would become restless and excited. The Pied Piper's reed could not have stirred the Hamelin children deeper than did those Sandgate bands the heart of our domestic. Fortunately, they generally passed early in the morning when we were indoors, but one day, returning home to lunch, we heard distant strains dying away upon the Hythe Road. We hurried in. Ethelbertha ran down into the kitchen; it was empty!—up into Amenda's bedroom; it was vacant! We called. There was no answer.

"'That miserable girl has gone off again,' said Ethelbertha. 'What a terrible misfortune it is for her. It's quite a disease.'

"Ethelbertha wanted me to go to Sandgate camp and enquire for her. I was sorry for the girl myself, but the picture of a young and innocent-looking man wandering about a complicated camp, enquiring for a lost domestic, presenting itself to my mind, I said that I'd rather not.

"Ethelbertha thought me heartless, and said that if I would not go she would go herself. I replied that I thought one female member of my household was enough in that camp at a time, and requested her not to. Ethelbertha expressed her sense of my inhuman behaviour by haughtily declining to eat any lunch, and I expressed my sense of her unreasonableness by sweeping the whole meal into the grate, after which Ethelbertha suddenly developed exuberant affection for the cat (who didn't want anybody's love, but wanted to get under the grate after the lunch), and I became supernaturally absorbed in the day-before-yesterday's newspaper.

"'WHO LOCKED YOU IN THERE?'"

"In the afternoon, strolling out into the garden, I heard the faint cry of a female in distress. I listened attentively, and the cry was repeated. I thought it sounded like Amenda's voice, but where it came from I could not conceive. It drew nearer, however, as I approached the bottom of the garden, and at last I located it in a small wooden shed, used by the proprietor of the house as a dark room for developing photographs.

"The door was locked. 'Is that you, Amenda?' I cried through the keyhole.

"'Yes, sir,' came back the muffled answer. 'Will you please let me out; you'll find the key on the ground near the door.'

"I discovered it on the grass about a yard away, and released her. 'Who locked you in there?' I asked.

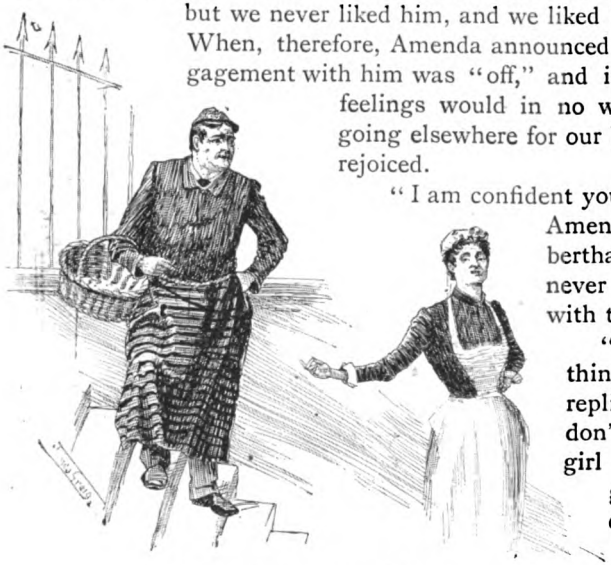
"'I did, sir,' she replied; 'I locked myself in, and pushed the key out under the door. I had to do it, or I should have gone off with those beastly soldiers.'

"'I hope I haven't inconvenienced you, sir,' she added, stepping out; 'I left the lunch all laid.'"

Amenda's passion for soldiers was her one tribute to sentiment.

Towards all others of the male sex she maintained an attitude of callous unsusceptibility, and her engagements with them (which were numerous) were entered into or abandoned on grounds so sordid as to seriously shock Ethelbertha.

When she came to us she was engaged to a pork butcher—with a milkman in reserve. For Amenda's sake we dealt with the man, but we never liked him, and we liked his pork still less. When, therefore, Amenda announced to us that her engagement with him was "off," and intimated that her feelings would in no way suffer by our going elsewhere for our bacon, we secretly rejoiced.



"HER ENGAGEMENT WAS 'OFF.'"

"I am confident you have done right, Amenda," said Ethelbertha; "you would never have been happy with that man."

"No, mum, I don't think I ever should," replied Amenda. "I don't see how any girl could as hadn't got the digestion of an ostrich."

Ethelbertha looked puzzled. "But what has digestion got to do with it?" she asked.

"A pretty good deal, mum," answered Amenda, "when you're thinking of marrying a man as can't make a sausage fit to eat."

"But, surely," exclaimed Ethelbertha, "you don't mean to say you're breaking off the match because you don't like his sausages!"

"Well, I suppose that's what it comes to," agreed Amenda, unconcernedly.

"What an awful idea!" sighed poor Ethelbertha, after a long pause. "Do you think you ever really loved him?"

"Oh, yes," said Amenda, "I loved him right enough, but it's no good loving a man that wants you to live on sausages that keep you awake all night."

"But does he want you to live on sausages?" persisted Ethelbertha.

"Oh, he doesn't say anything about it," explained Amenda; "but you know what it is, mum, when you marry a pork butcher: you're expected to eat what's left over. That's the mistake my poor cousin Eliza made. She married a muffin man. Of course, what he didn't sell thay had to finish up themselves. Why, one winter, when he had a run of bad luck, they lived for two months on nothing but muffins. I never saw a girl so changed in all my life. One has to think of these things, you know."

Later on, she engaged herself to a solicitor's messenger. She did this—as she frankly avowed to Ethelbertha—to assist her family, who were prosecuting some petty law case at the time. He was a smart, steady man, a great favourite with his employers, and, out of kindly feeling towards him, they did the business for Amenda's father, charging only "out-of-pockets."

"GAVE HER A COCOANUT."

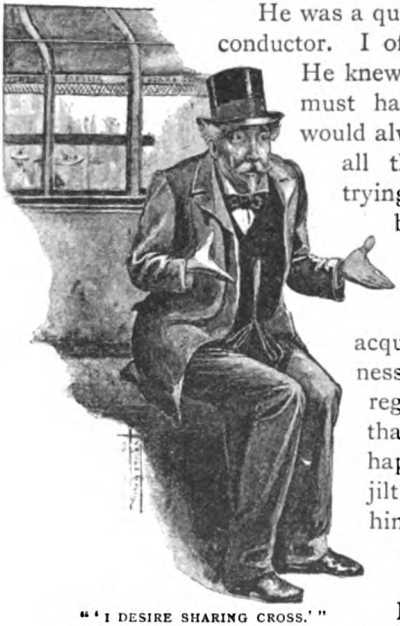
Six months after the case was ended, she broke off the match. She said that, on reflection, she could not help seeing what an advantage he would have over her—he being in a solicitor's office, with the law at his fingers' ends—should she ever find it necessary to summons him.

"But, my good girl," said Ethelbertha, quite distressed, "one doesn't marry a man with the idea of subsequently summonsing him!"

"No, mum," said Amenda, "one always hopes one will never need to, I'm sure, but it's just as well to be prepared. I knew a girl, when I was in service at Hastings, that loved a printer, and they were both going to commit suicide because her parents didn't want 'em to marry; and now he costs her four shillings a month regular in summonses. It's no good shutting one's eyes to things, mum."

But the most shamefully mercenary engagement that I think Amenda ever entered into was one with a 'bus conductor. We were living in the North of London then, and she had a young man,

a cheesemonger, who kept a shop in Lupus Street, Chelsea. He could not come up to her because of the shop, so once a week she used to go down to him. One did not ride ten miles for a penny in those days, and she found the fare from Holloway to Victoria and back a severe tax upon her purse. The same 'bus that took her down at six brought her back at ten. During the first journey the 'bus conductor stared at Amenda; during the second he talked to her, during the third he gave her a cocoanut, during the fourth he proposed to her, and was promptly accepted. After that, Amenda was enabled to visit her cheesemonger without expense.



"'I DESIRE SHARING CROSS.'"

He was a quaint character himself, was this 'bus conductor. I often rode with him to Fleet Street. He knew me quite well (I suppose Amenda must have pointed me out to him), and would always ask me after her—aloud, before all the other passengers, which was trying—and give me messages to take back to her. Where women were concerned he had what is called "a way" with him, and from the extent and variety of his female acquaintance, and the evident tenderness with which the majority of them regarded him, I am inclined to hope that Amenda's desertion of him (which happened contemporaneously with her jilting of the cheesemonger) caused him less prolonged suffering than might otherwise have been the case.

He was a man from whom I derived a good deal of amusement one way and another. Thinking of him brings back to my mind a somewhat odd incident.

One afternoon, I jumped upon his 'bus in the Seven Sisters Road. An elderly Frenchman was the only other occupant of the vehicle. "You vil not forget me," the Frenchman was saying as I entered, "I desire Sharing Cross."

"I won't forget yer," answered the conductor, "you shall 'ave yer Sharing Cross. Don't make a fuss about it."

"That's the third time 'ee's arst me not to forget 'im," he

remarked to me in a stentorian aside; "'ee don't giv' yer much chance of doin' it, does 'ee?"

At the corner of the Holloway Road we drew up, and our conductor began to shout after the manner of his species: "Charing Cross—Charing Cross—'ere yer are—Come along, lady—Charing Cross."

The little Frenchman jumped up, and prepared to exit; the conductor pushed him back.

"Sit down and don't be silly," he said; "this ain't Charing Cross."

The Frenchman looked puzzled, but collapsed meekly. We picked up a few passengers, and proceeded on our way. Half a mile up the Liverpool Road a lady stood on the kerb regarding us as we passed with that pathetic mingling of desire and distrust which is the average woman's attitude towards conveyances of all kinds. Our conductor stopped.

"THE CONDUCTOR COLLARED HIM."

"Where d'yer want to go to?" he asked her severely—omnibus conductors have a manner of addressing all pedestrians as though they were lost children or suspicious loiterers—"Strand—Charing Cross?"

The Frenchman did not hear or did not understand the first part of the speech, but he caught the words "Charing Cross," and bounced up and out on to the step. The conductor collared him as he was getting off, and jerked him back savagely.

"Carnt yer keep still a minute," he cried indignantly; "blessed if you don't want lookin' after like a bloomin' kid."

"I vont to be put down at Sharing Cross," answered the little Frenchman, humbly.

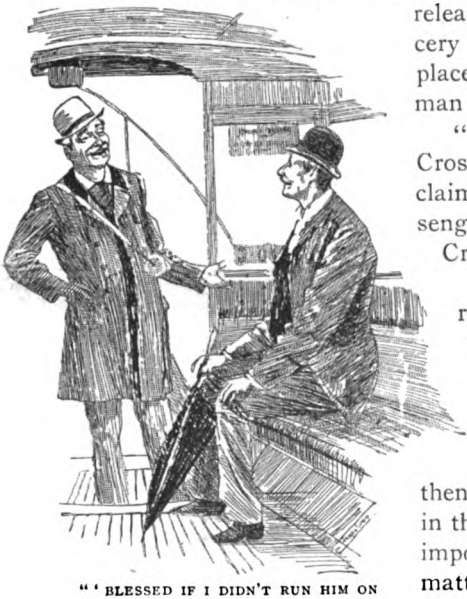
"You vont to be put down at Sharing Cross," repeated the other bitterly, as he led him back to his seat. "I shall put yer down in the middle of the road if I 'ave much more of yer. You

stop there till I come and sling yer out. I ain't likely to let yer go much past yer Sharing Cross, I shall be too jolly glad to get rid o' yer."

"The poor Frenchman subsided, and we jolted on. At "The Angel" we, of course, stopped. "Charing Cross," shouted the conductor, and up sprang the Frenchman.

"Oh, my Gawd," said the conductor, taking him by the shoulders and forcing him down into the corner seat, "wot am I to do? Carnt somebody sit on 'im?"

He held him firmly down until the 'bus started, and then released him. At the top of Chancery Lane the same scene took place, and the poor little Frenchman became exasperated.



"'BLESSED IF I DIDN'T RUN HIM ON TO VICTORIA.'"

"He keep on saying Sharing Cross, Sharing Cross," he exclaimed, turning to the other passengers; "and it is *not* Sharing Cross. He is fool."

"Carnt yer understand," retorted the conductor, equally indignant; "of course I say Sharing Cross—I mean Charing Cross, but that don't mean that it *is* Charing Cross. That means that——" and then perceiving from the blank look in the Frenchman's face the utter impossibility of ever making the matter clear to him, he turned to us with an appealing gesture, and asked:

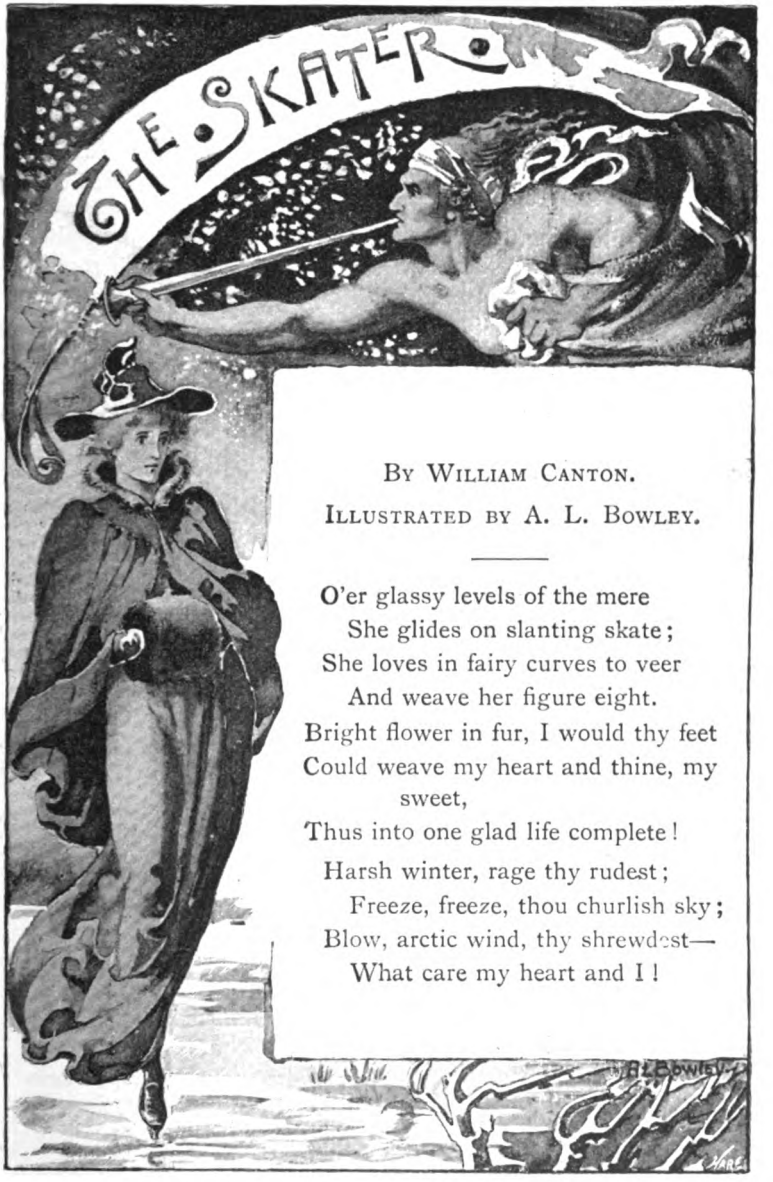
"Does any gentleman know the French for 'bloomin' idiot'?"

A day or two afterwards, I happened to enter his omnibus again.

"Well," I asked him, "did you get your French friend to Charing Cross all right?"

"No, sir," he replied, "you'll 'ardly believe it, but I 'ad a bit of a row with a policeman just before I got to the corner, and it put 'im clean out o' my 'ead. Blessed if I didn't run 'im on to Victoria."

(To be continued.)



By William Canton.

Illustrated by A. L. Bowley.

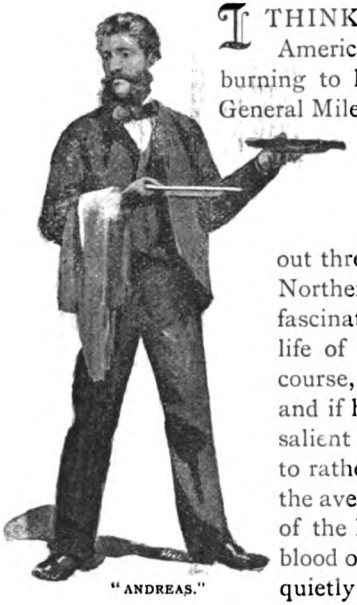
O'er glassy levels of the mere
She glides on slanting skate;
She loves in fairy curves to veer
And weave her figure eight.
Bright flower in fur, I would thy feet
Could weave my heart and thine, my sweet,
Thus into one glad life complete!

Harsh winter, rage thy rudest;
Freeze, freeze, thou churlish sky;
Blow, arctic wind, thy shrewdest—
What care my heart and I!

My Servant Andreas.

By Archibald Forbes.

Illustrations by Frederic Villiers.



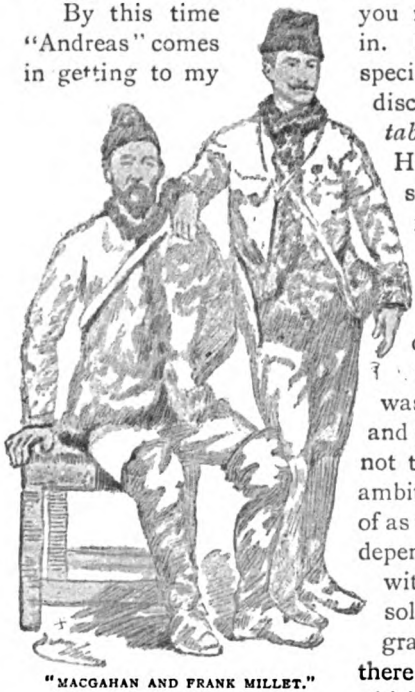
"ANDREAS."

I THINK it quite likely that some of my young American friends, about ten months ago, were burning to have an opportunity of accompanying General Miles down the Pacific coast, and of describing in glowing sentences to their countrymen at home how Uncle Sam's young man turned to flight the Chilian insurrectionists, who were breathing out threatening and slaughter against the great Northern Republic. There is an undoubted fascination in the picturesque and adventurous life of the war correspondent. One must, of course, have a distinct bent for the avocation, and if he is to succeed he must possess certain salient attributes. He must expose himself to rather greater risks than fall to the lot of the average fighting man, without enjoying any of the happiness of retaliation which stirs the blood of the latter; the correspondent must sit quietly on his horse in the fire, and, while watching every turn in the battle, must wear the aspect as if he rather enjoyed the storm of missiles than otherwise. When the fighting is over, the soldier, if not killed, generally can eat and sleep; ere the echoes of it are silent, the correspondent of energy—and if he has not energy he is not worth his salt—must already be galloping his hardest towards the nearest telegraph wire, which, as like as not, is a hundred miles distant. He must "get there," by hook or by crook, in a minimum of time; and as soon as his message is on the wires, he must be hurrying back to the army, else he may chance to miss the great battle of the war. The correspondent must be most things to all men; he must have the sweet, angelic temper of a woman, be as affable as if he were running for office, and at the same time be big and ugly enough to impress the conviction that it would be extremely unwise to take any liberties with him.

The career, no doubt, has some incidental drawbacks. No fewer than five British correspondents were killed in the recent campaigns in the Soudan. General Sherman threatened to hang all the correspondents found in his camp after a certain day, and General Sherman was the kind of man to fulfil any threat he made. I suppose there was no correspondent taking part in the Franco-German and Russo-Turkish wars who was not in custody over and over again on suspicion of being a spy. I have been a prisoner myself in France, Spain, Servia, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Russia, Roumania and Bulgaria; and I may perhaps venture to remark in passing that I cannot recommend any of these countries from this point of view. But the casual confinements, half irritating, half comic, to which he may be subjected, do not bother the war correspondent of the old world nearly as much as do the foreign languages which, if he is not a good linguist, hamper him every hour of every day. He really should possess the gift of tongues—be conversant with all European languages, a neat assortment of the Asiatic languages, and a few of the African tongues, such as Abyssinian, Ashantee, Zulu, and Soudanese. But how few in the nature of things can approximate this polyglot versatility. Often in Eastern Europe, and in Afghanistan, I have envied Messrs. Swinton, Smalley, Whitelaw Reed, and the other notable war correspondents of the American Civil War, in that they had not the difficulties of outlandish tongues to contend with. I own myself to be a poor linguist, and have many and many a time suffered for my dullness of what the Scotch call "up-take." It is true that I was fairly conversant with French and German, and could express my wants in Russian, Roumanian, Bulgarian, Spanish, Turkish, Hindustanee, Pushtoo, and Burmese, every word of which smatterings I have long since forgotten. But the truth is that the poorest peoples in the world in acquiring foreign languages are the English and the French; the readiest are the Russians and Americans. It was, after a fashion, a liberal education to listen to the fluency in some half-dozen languages of poor McGahan, the "Ohio boy," who graduated from the plough to be perhaps the most brilliant war correspondent of modern times. His compatriot and colleague, Frank Millet, who has fallen away from glory as a war correspondent, and has taken to the inferior trade of painting, seemed to pick up a language by the mere accident of finding himself on the soil where it was spoken. In the first three days, after crossing the Danube into Bulgaria, Millet went about with book in hand, gathering in the names of

things at which he pointed, and jotting down each acquisition in the book. On the fourth day he could swear in Bulgarian, copiously, fervently, and with a measure of intelligibility. Within a week he had conquered the uncouth tongue. As he voyaged lately down the Danube from source to mouth, charmingly describing the scenic panorama of the great river in the pages of *Harper*, those of you who have read those sketches will not have failed to notice how Millet talked to German, Hungarian, Servian, Bulgarian, Roumanian, and Turkish, each in his own tongue, those diverse languages having been acquired by him during the few months of the Russo-Turkish war.

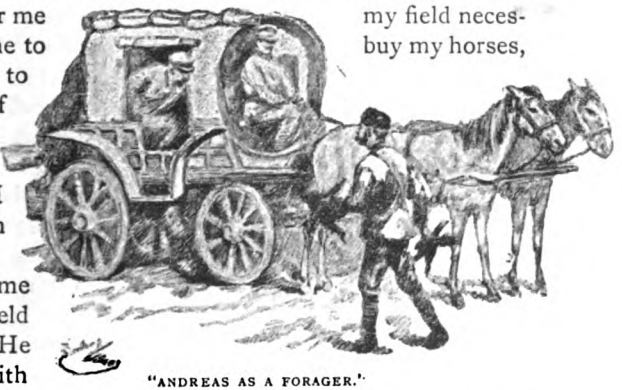
By this time "Andreas" comes in getting to my you may be wondering just where in. Perhaps I have been over long specific subject; but I will not be discursive any more. It was at the *table d'hôte* in the Serbische Krone Hotel, in Belgrade, where I first set eyes on Andreas. In the year 1876, Servia had thought proper to throw off the yoke of her Turkish suzerain, and to attempt to assert her independence by force of arms. But for very irregularly paid tribute she was virtually independent already, and probably in all Servia there were not two hundred Turks. But she ambitiously desired to have the name of as well as the actuality of being independent; the Russians helped her with arms, officers, and volunteer soldiers; and when I reached Belgrade, in May of the year named, there had already been fighting, in which the Servians had by no means got the worst. No word of the Servian tongue had I, and it was the reverse of pleasant for a war correspondent in such plight to learn that outside of Belgrade nobody, or at least hardly anybody, knew a word of any other language than the native Servian. As I ate, I was being attended by a very assiduous waiter, whose alertness and anxiety to please were very conspicuous. He was smart with quite un-Oriental smartness; he whisked about the tables with



"MACGAHAN AND FRANK MILLET."

deftness; he spoke to me in German, to the Russian officers over against me in what I assumed was Russian, to the Servians dining behind me in what I took to be Servian. I liked the look of the man; there was intelligence in his aspect. One could not call him handsome, but there was character in the keen black eye, the high features and the pronounced chin, fringed on either side by bushy black whiskers.

I had brought no servant with me; the average British servant is worse than useless in a foreign country, and the dubiously-polyglot courier is a snare and a deception on campaign. I had my eye on Andreas for a couple of days, during which he was of immense service to me. He seemed to know and stand well with everyone in Belgrade; it was he, indeed, who presented me in the restaurant to the Prime Minister and the Minister for War, who got together for me my field necessaries, who helped me to buy my horses, and who narrated to me the progress of the campaign so far as it had gone. On the third day I had him in my room and asked whether he would like to come with me into the field as my servant. He accepted the offer with effusion; we struck hands on the compact; he tendered me credentials which I ascertained to be extremely satisfactory; and then he gave me a little sketch of himself. It was somewhat mixed, as indeed was his origin. Primarily he was a Servian, but his maternal grandmother had been a Bosniak, an earlier ancestress had been in a Turkish harem, there was a strain in his blood of the Hungarian zinganee—the gipsy of Eastern Europe, and one could not look at his profile without a suspicion that there was a Jewish element in his pedigree. "A pure mongrel," was what a gentleman of the British Legation termed Andreas, and this self-contradictory epithet was scarcely out of place.



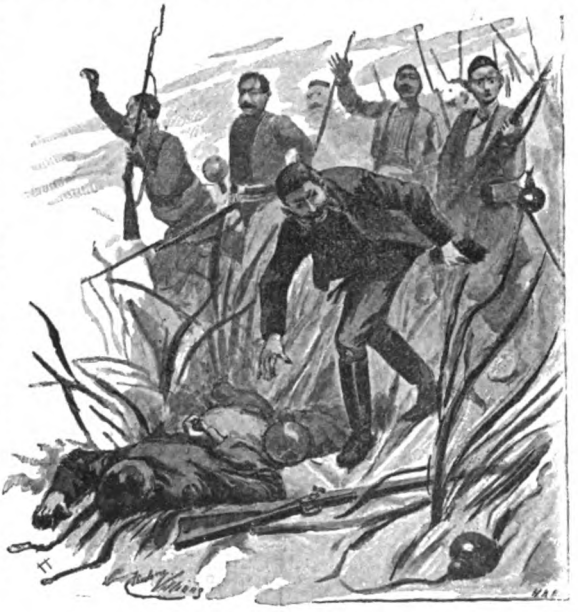
"ANDREAS AS A FORAGER."

Andreas turned out well. He was as hardy as a hill-goat, careless how and when he ate, or where he slept, which, indeed, was mostly in the open. It seemed to me that he had cousins all over

Servia, chiefly of the female persuasion, and I am morally certain that the Turkish strain in his blood had in Andreas its natural development in a species of *fin-de-siècle* polygamy. Sherman's prize "bummer" was not in it with Andreas as a forager. At first, indeed, I suspected him of actual plundering, so copiously did he bring in supplies, and so little had I to pay for them; but I was not long in discovering that all kinds of produce were dirt cheap in Servia, and that as I could myself buy a lamb for a quarter, it was not surprising that Andreas, to the manner born, could easily obtain one for half the money. He was an excellent horsemaster, and the stern vigour with which he chastised the occasional neglect of the cousin whom he had brought into my service as groom, was borne in upon me by the frequent howls which were audible from the rear of my tent. There was not a road in all Servia with whose every winding Andreas was not conversant, and this "extensive and peculiar" knowledge of his was often of great service to me. He was a light-weight and an excellent rider; I have sent him off to Belgrade with a telegram at dusk, and he was back again by breakfast time next morning, after a gallop of quite a hundred miles.

No exertion fatigued him; I never saw the man out of humour; there was but one matter in regard to which I ever had to chide him, and in that I had perforce to let him have his own way, because I do not believe that he could restrain himself. He had served the term in the army which is, or was then, obligatory on all Servians; and on the road or in camp he was rather more of a "peace at any price" man than ever was the late Mr. John Bright himself. When the first fight occurred, Andreas claimed to be allowed to witness it along with me. I demurred; he might get hit; and if anything should happen to him, what should I do for a servant? At length I gave him the firm order to remain in camp, and started myself with the groom behind me on my second horse. The fighting occurred eight miles from camp, and in the course of it, leaving the groom in the rear, I had accompanied the Russian General Dochtouroff into a most unpleasantly hot place, where a storm of Turkish shells were falling in the effort to hinder the withdrawal of a disabled Servian battery. I happened to glance over my shoulder, and lo! Andreas on foot was at my horse's tail, obviously in a state of ecstatic enjoyment of the situation. I peremptorily ordered him back, and he departed sullenly, calmly strolling along the line of Turkish fire. Just then, Tchernaieff, the Servian Commander-in-Chief, had, it seemed,

ordered a detachment of infantry to take in flank the Turkish guns. From where we stood I could discern the Servian soldiers hurrying forward close under the fringe of a wood near the line of retirement along which Andreas was sulking. Andreas saw them too, and retreated no step further, but cut across to them, snatching up a gun as he ran, and the last I saw of him was while he was waving on the militiamen with his billycock, and loosing off an occasional bullet, while he emitted yells of defiance against the Turks, which might well have struck terror into their very marrow. Andreas came into camp at night very streaky with powder stains, minus the lobe of one ear, uneasy as he caught my eye, yet with a certain elateness of mien. I sacked him that night, and he said he didn't care, and that he was not ashamed of himself. Next morning, as I was rising, he rushed into the tent, knelt down, clasped my knees, and bedewed my ankles with his tears. Of course I reinstated him; I couldn't do without him, and I think he knew it.



"SNATCHING UP A GUN AS HE RAN."

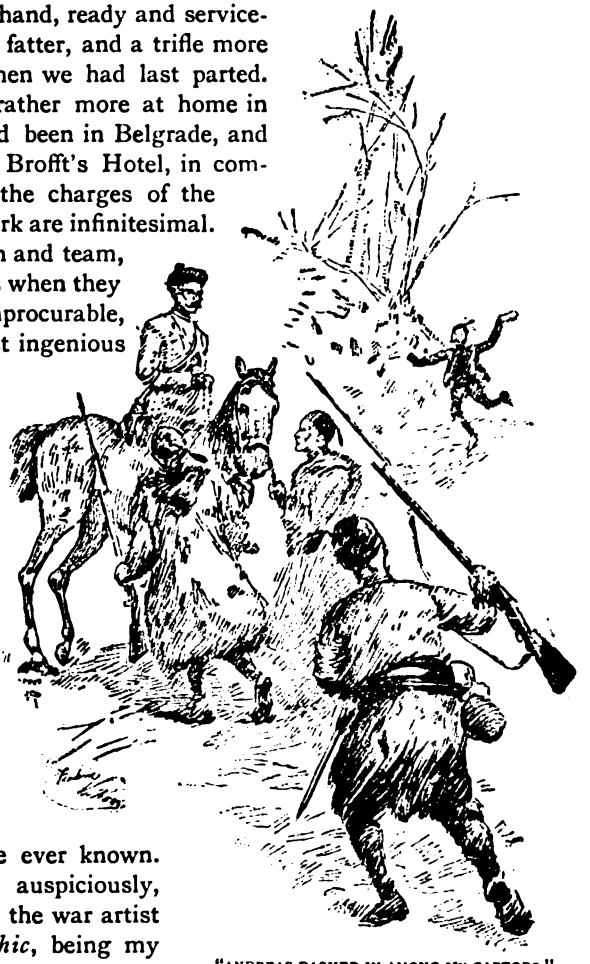
But I had yielded too easily. Andreas had established a precedent. He insisted, in a quiet, positive manner, on accompanying me to every subsequent battle; and I had to consent, always taking his pledge that he would obey the injunctions I might lay upon him. And, as a matter of course, he punctually and invariably violated that pledge when the crisis of the fighting was drawing to a head, and just when this "peace at any price" man could not control the bloodthirst that was parching him.

One never knows how events are to fall out. It happened that this resolution on the part of Andreas to accompany me into the

fights once assuredly saved my life. It was on the day of Djunis, the last battle fought by the Servians. In the early part of the day there was a good deal of scattered woodland fighting in front of the entrenched line, which they abandoned when the Turks came on in earnest. Andreas and I were among the trees trying to find a position from which something was to be seen, when all of a sudden I, who was in advance, plumped right into the centre of a small scouting party of Turks. They tore me out of the saddle, and I had given myself up for lost—for the Turks took no prisoners, their cheerful practice being to slaughter first and then abominably to mutilate—when suddenly Andreas dashed in among my captors, shouting aloud in a language which I took to be Turkish, since he bellowed "Effendi" as he pointed to me. He had thrown away his billycock and substituted a fez, which he afterwards told me he always carried in case of accidents, and in one hand he waved a dingy piece of parchment with a seal dangling from it, which I assumed was some obsolete firman. The result was truly amazing, and the scene had some real humour in it. With profound salaams, the Turks unhanded me, helped me to mount, and, as I rode off at a tangent with Andreas at my horse's head, called after me what sounded like friendly farewells. When we were back among the Russians—I don't remember seeing much of the Servians later on that day—Andreas explained that he had passed himself for the Turkish dragoman of a British correspondent whom the Padishah delighted to honour, and that, after expressing a burning desire to defile the graves of their collective female ancestry, he had assured my captors that they might count themselves as dead men if they did not immediately release me. To his ready-witted conduct I undoubtedly owe the ability to write now this record of a man of curiously complicated nature.

When the campaign ended with the Servian defeat at Djunis, Andreas went back to his headwaitership at the Serbische Krone in Belgrade. Before leaving that capital I had the honour of being present at his nuptials, a ceremony the amenity of which was somewhat disturbed by the violent incursion into the sacred edifice of sundry ladies all claiming to have prior claims on the bridegroom of the hour. They were, however, placated, and subsequently joined the marriage feast in the great arbour behind the Krone. Andreas faithfully promised to come to me to the ends of the earth on receipt of a telegram, if I should require his services, and he were alive.

Next spring the Russo-Turkish war broke out, and I hurried eastward in time to see the first Cossack cross the Pruth. I had telegraphed to Andreas from England to meet me at Bazias on the Danube below Belgrade. Bazias is the place where the railway used to end, and where we took steamer for the Lower Danube. Andreas was duly on hand, ready and serviceable as of old, a little fatter, and a trifle more consequential than when we had last parted. He was, if possible, rather more at home in Bucharest than he had been in Belgrade, and recommended me to Brofft's Hotel, in comparison with which the charges of the Brunswick in New York are infinitesimal. He bought my wagon and team, he found riding horses when they were said to be unprocurable, he constructed a most ingenious tent, of which the wagon was, so to speak, the roof-tree, he laid in stores, arranged for relays of couriers, and furnished me with a coachman in the person of a Roumanian Jew who he one day owned was a distant connection, and whose leading attribute was, that he could survive more sleep than any other human being I have ever known. We took the field auspiciously, Mr. Frederic Villiers, the war artist of the London *Graphic*, being my campaigning comrade. Thus early I discerned a slight rift in the lute. Andreas did not like Villiers, which showed his bad taste, or rather, perhaps, the narrowness of his capacity of affection; and I fear Villiers did not much like Andreas, whom he thought too familiar. This was true, and it



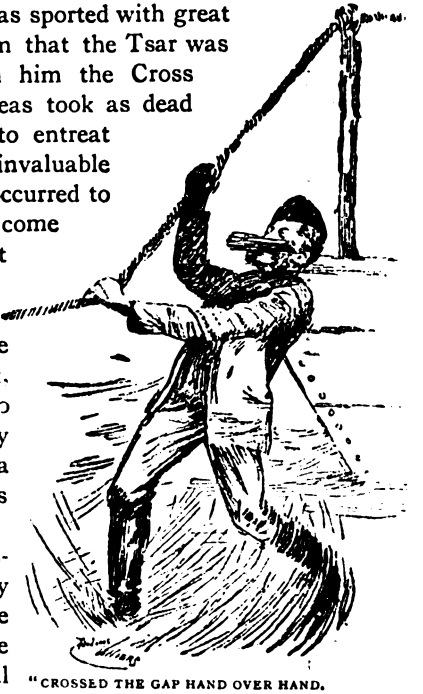
"ANDREAS DASHED IN AMONG MY CAPTORS."

was my fault; but really it was with difficulty that I could bring myself to treat Andreas as a servant. He was more, in my estimation, in the nature of the confidential major-domo, and to me he was simply invaluable. Villiers had to chew his moustache, and glower discontentedly at Andreas.

I had some good couriers for the conveyance of despatches back across the Danube to Bucharest, whence everything was telegraphed to London; but they were essentially fair-weather men. The casual courier may be alert, loyal, and trustworthy; he may be relied on to try his honest best, but it is not to be expected of him that he will greatly dare and count his life but as dross when his incentive to enterprise is merely filthy lucre. But I could trust Andreas to dare and to endure—to overcome obstacles, and, if man could, to "get there," where, in the base-quarters in Bucharest, the amanuenses were waiting to copy out in round hand for the foreign telegraphist the rapid script of the correspondent scribbling for life in the saddle or the cleft of a commanding tree while the shells were whistling past. We missed him dreadfully when he was gone—even Villiers, who liked good cooking, owned to thinking long for his return. For, in addition to his other virtues, Andreas was a capital cook. It is true that his courses had a habit of arriving at long and uncertain intervals. After a dish of pungent stew, no other viands appearing to loom in the near future, Villiers and myself would betake ourselves to smoking, and perhaps on a quiet day would lapse into slumber. From this we would be aroused by Andreas to partake of a second course of roast chicken, the bird having been alive and unconscious of its impending fate when the first course had been served. No man is perfect, and as regarded Andreas there were some petty spots on the sun. He had, for instance, a mania for the purchase of irrelevant poultry, and for accommodating the fowls in our wagon, tied by the legs, against the day of starvation, which he always, but causelessly, apprehended. I do not suppose any reader has ever had any experience of domestic poultry as bedfellows, and I may caution him earnestly against making any such experiment.

I do not know whether it is a detraction from Andreas's worth to mention that another characteristic of his was the habit of awaking us in the still watches of the night, for the purpose of imparting his views on recondite phases of the great Eastern question. But how trivial were such peccadilloes in a man who was so resolute not to be beaten in getting my despatch to the telegraph wire, that once, when three pontoons of the bridge across

the Danube were sunk, he crossed the gap hand over hand by the hand-rope, sloshing down with the current as the slack of the rope gave to his weight! Andreas became quite an institution in the Russian camp. When Ignatieff, the Tsar's intimate, the great diplomatist who has now curiously fizzled out, would honour us by partaking sometimes of afternoon tea in our tent, he would call Andreas by his name and call him "Molodetz"—the Russian for "brave fellow." In the Servian campaign Dochtouroff had got him the Takova cross, which Andreas sported with great pride, and Ignatieff used to tell him that the Tsar was seriously thinking of conferring on him the Cross of St. George, badinage which Andreas took as dead earnest. MacGahan used gravely to entreat him to take greater care of his invaluable life, and hint that if any calamity occurred to him, the campaign would *ipso facto* come to an end. Andreas knew that MacGahan was quizzing him, but it was exceedingly droll how he purred and bridled under the light touch of that genial humourist, whose merits his own countrymen, so my thinking, have never adequately recognised. The old story of a prophet having scant honour in his own country.



"CROSSED THE GAP HAND OVER HAND.

After the long strain of the desperate but futile attack made by the Russians on Plevna in the early part of the September of the war, I fell a victim to the malarial fever of the Lower Danube, and had to be invalided back to Bucharest. The illness grew upon me, and my condition became very serious. Worthy Andreas nursed me with great tenderness and assiduity in the lodgings to which I had been brought, since they would not accept a fever patient at Brofft's. After some days of wretchedness I became delirious, and, of course, lost consciousness; my last recollection was of Andreas wetting my parched lips with lemonade. When I recovered my senses, and looked out feebly, there was nobody in the room. How long I had been unconscious I had no idea. I lay there in a half stupor till evening, unable from weakness to

summon any assistance. In the dusk came the English doctor who had been attending me. "Where is Andreas?" he asked. I could not tell him. "He was here last night," he said; "you have been delirious for seven days." The woman of the house was summoned. She had not seen Andreas since the previous night, but, busy about her own domestic affairs, had no suspicion until she entered the room that Andreas was not with me still.

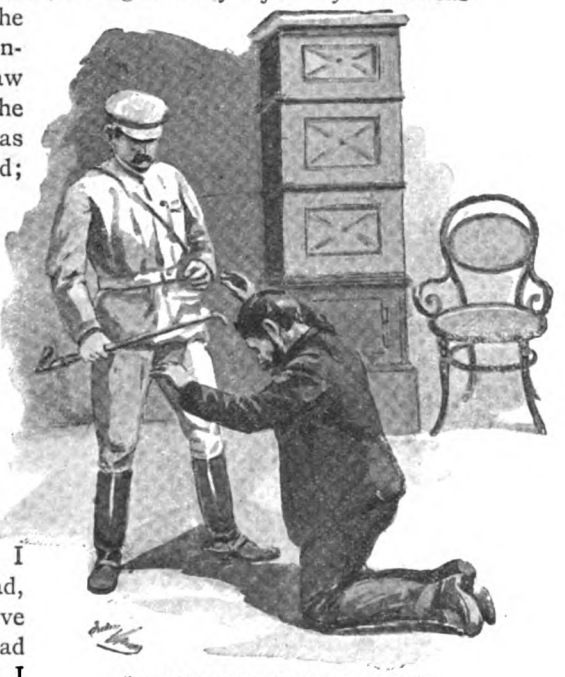
Andreas never returned. It appeared that he had taken away all his belongings. One day, when gradually mending, I put my hand under the pillow with intent to find my watch, which was an heirloom, and wind it up. I could find no watch. No more could I find the bag of ducats which was alongside the watch before I lost my senses. Search was made throughout the room without success, and, with whatever reluctance to believe a thing so utterly unlikely, I could not refrain from the conviction that Andreas must have carried off both money and watch. The thought caused a relapse, but at length I attained convalescence, and was able to drive out. But the doctor was firm that during the now imminent winter I was not to return to the field. Fortunately, my able colleagues, MacGahan and Millet, were there; and I was therefore the less distressed by Dr. ——'s peremptory sentence on me. I was condemned to return to England as soon as I should be strong enough to travel.

When I had to leave the Plevna front, my colleagues temporarily took charge of my field equipment. But I had brought back to Bucharest my best riding horse, and during my illness he had been standing at livery in the stables of the English Tramway Company. Determining now on the melancholy necessity of selling an animal which had on many a hard day and many a long night-ride served me stanchly, I drove to the stables, and instructed the manager to sell my horse. "Your horse!" he exclaimed, in evident surprise; "your horse was sold weeks ago! Your man, Andreas, came here with a message that we were to dispose of it; and I sold it next day to General Todleben on his way through Bucharest to take the command before Plevna. It fetched a good price, 105 ducats, more than you gave for it; Andreas called for the money, and, of course, I gave it to him."

So Andreas was thief and rogue—deliberate thief and rogue. I was angry, but I was yet more heart-sorry that so fine and true a native should have thus fallen. Just as I was leaving Bucharest for England, a letter came to me from a friend in Galatz, a commercial city of Roumania, near the mouth of the Danube. Its

P.S. only is worth quoting. "So you have parted with your man, Andreas. I thought from what you had told me that you would retain him for life. He is here now, I saw him drunk in the street yesterday. He told Kennedy that he believed you were dead."

I went straight to Galatz, a long half-day's journey. Andreas was not hard to find; he was smoking in the "Concordia" saloon. I saw him before he saw me; he had a furtive air, he was pallid and his lips twitched; he looked to me on the verge of *delirium tremens*. I approached him from behind, and uttered the one word, "Andreas!" At the word, he started as if he had been shot, spun round. dropped on his knees, with his hands raised beseechingly, and cried in a broken voice, "Before God, master, I thought you were dead, else I should never have done it! I have not had a happy moment since I threw away my good name —I could not go home! Kill me, send me to prison, punish me how you choose. I shall rejoice to suffer!" And the poor wretch grovelled before me on his stomach.



"ANDREAS DROPPED ON HIS KNEES."

I had meant to punish him; but he was too broken for chastisement. I could not send to prison the man who had saved my life among the pine-trees of Djunis. I wonder if he really thought me dead—not that, if so, his act was thereby materially palliated. And I thought of two little sentences which my mother taught me when I was a child: "Judge not that ye be not judged," and "Lead us not into temptation." I pulled the man on to his feet and grasped his hand, then with the words, "Give me my father's watch—good-bye, Andreas. I shall remember all the good in you, and forget those last bad days." I turned from him, and quitted the "Concordia" with a lump in my throat that I could not swallow down.

Told by the Colonel.

X.

A MATRIMONIAL ROMANCE.

By W. L. Alden.

Illustrations by R. Jack.

"AND by the way," continued the Colonel, "a curious thing about this Josiah Wilson was that he was married for fifteen years and never had any wife whatever.'

The Colonel had begun a story concerning one Josiah Wilson, which promised to be interesting, but his incidental allusion to Mr. Wilson's matrimonial experience awakened our curiosity, and we begged him to interrupt his narrative long enough to tell us how it came to pass that Josiah was a married man who never had a wife.

"HOWLED FOR HELP."

"The marriage laws in the United States," said the Colonel, giving his chair an increased tilt backwards, which was his usual way of beginning a fresh anecdote, "are as peculiar in their way as are the divorce laws. You would think to look at them that they would permit anybody to marry anybody else in any way that either of them might choose, but for all that they sometimes make it impossible for a man or a woman to get married. There was a couple who intended to be married in a balloon, which is a style of lunacy that is quite fashionable in some parts of the country, though I can't see why a man should want to risk his neck in a balloon on his wedding day unless it is that it takes so much courage to be married at all that a man forgets all about such minor dangers as are connected with ballooning. The bride, the minister, and two witnesses of assorted sexes went up in the balloon at the appointed time, and, naturally, the bridegroom intended to go with them, but he accidentally caught his foot in a neglected guy-rope, and went up head downwards about twenty-

feet below the car. The party in the balloon could not haul him up because they could not get hold of the rope, and the bride would not consent to give up the trip, because the groom had always been a little shy, and she was afraid that, if she let him go this time, she might not be able to land him again. So the parson went on with the ceremony, and the groom made most of his responses in bad language, and howled for help when he wasn't swearing. When the ceremony was over, the aeronaut managed to land the balloon without seriously damaging the bridegroom, but when, a year or two afterwards, the bride wanted to get her divorce, the court held that there had never been any marriage, for the reason that both the groom and the bride had not appeared together in the presence of the officiating minister, and that, furthermore, there was no provision in the law which would permit a man to be married upside down.

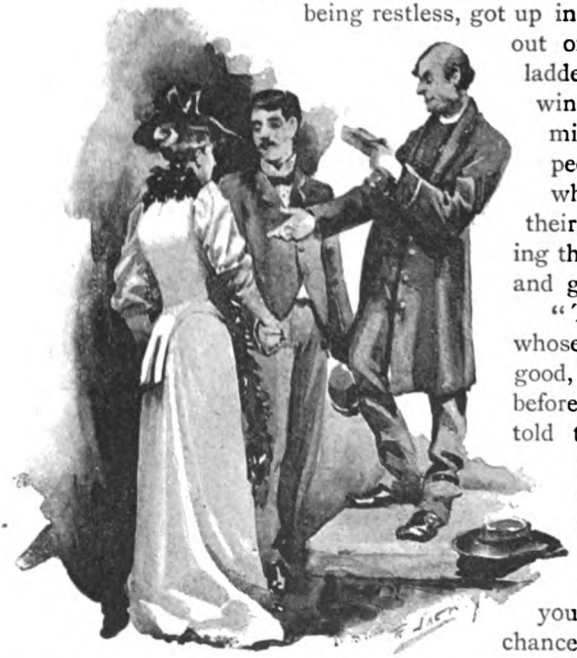
"SMITH'S BULL-DOG."

"But to get back to Josiah Wilson. He lived in Indiana, close to the boundary line between that State and Illinois, and he courted Melinda Smith, a young woman who lived a little way up the mountain side with her father and three brothers. The girl was anxious to be married, but her family was dead against it. You see Josiah was a Republican and a Methodist, while the Smiths were Democrats and Baptists, and, naturally, they hated each other like poison, and one night as old man Smith and Josiah met on their way to rival prayer meetings, they exchanged revolver shots, without, however, doing any harm. Then once Josiah had most of the calf of his leg taken off by the Smiths' bull-dog, and twice the Smith boys came into the sitting-room where Josiah was calling on Melinda, and suggested to him with their shot-guns that he had better go home. Gradually Josiah and Melinda came to the conclusion that her family was resolved to discourage the match, so they determined to elope and be married without the knowledge or consent of anybody.

"One dark night Josiah carried a ladder and planted it under Melinda's window. He had advised her to walk out of the front

door, which was always left unlocked at night, but she refused, saying that if she was going to elope she should do it in the proper way, and that if Josiah had no respect for her, she had some little respect for herself. She climbed down the ladder with a good deal of difficulty, because she insisted that Josiah should help her, and also that he should stand forty yards away, for reasons connected with her ankles, and he found it rather trying to follow out these contradictory orders. However, Melinda reached the ground at last, and the pair started in a carriage that had been waiting just around a bend in the road, in company with the Methodist minister.

Their plan was to drive to the next town and there to be married, but it happened that one of the Smith boys, being restless, got up in the night, and, looking out of the window, saw the ladder standing at Melinda's window. In about twenty minutes after the young people had started, the whole Smith family and their shot-guns were following the runaways in a waggon, and gaining on them fast.



"THEY WERE MARRIED."

"The Methodist minister, whose hearing was unusually good, heard the sound of hoofs before Josiah noticed it, and told the young people that there was not the least doubt that they were pursued, and would be overtaken in a very few minutes. 'And then, you know,' he added, 'the chances are that, being Baptists, they will shoot first, and ask for explanations afterwards. The only thing for us to do is to get the marriage ceremony over before they come up. Then they will see that opposition is of no use, and will listen to reason.'

"Josiah and Melinda at once consented, and the parson, noticing a little clearing in the woods on the left hand side of the road, and a flat sort of tombstone standing in the middle of it, said that he

would stand on that stone and marry his young friends so quick that it would make their hair curl. He was particularly glad to meet with a handy tombstone, for he said that a tombstone was the next thing to a church, and that to be married by the side of a tomb would be almost as solemn as to be married in a minister's study. So the party hastily descended; the parson mounted the stone; Josiah and Melinda joined hands in front of him, and they were married, and the parson had kissed the bride and pocketed his fee just as the Smiths' waggon drove up and the Smith boys cocked their guns and covered the party. But the parson was wide awake. He had his revolver out and old man Smith covered before anybody had taken aim at him, but, instead of shooting, he remarked that he was a minister of the blessed gospel of peace; that there was no necessity for bloodshed, and that he would blow a hole through old Smith unless the Smith boys lowered their weapons and consented to argue the matter. 'The fact is, Colonel Smith,' said the parson, 'you're too late. The young people are legally married, and the sooner you accept the situation the better. I married them not two minutes ago, standing on that identical tombstone.'

"'YOU'LL COME STRAIGHT HOME WITH ME.'"

"Colonel Smith was a lawyer, and the sharpest one in that part of the country. He saw the force of the minister's remarks, so he told the boys to put up their guns, and he shook hands with the minister. Then he inquired, in a careless sort of way, where Josiah and Melinda had stood while they were being married. The parson showed the footprints of the bride and groom, and then Colonel Smith turned to Melinda and said, 'You'll come straight home with me. There hasn't been any marriage yet. That stone

is the boundary mark between Indiana and Illinois, and you were standing in Indiana and that other idiot was standing in Illinois when the parson tried to marry you. Nobody can marry in two States at the same time, and I shan't recognise the pretended marriage till a court of law compels me to do so, which will be never. I hope this will teach you the folly of fooling with Methodism. When you want to get married next time try a Baptist minister, who will know the difference between a tombstone and a boundary mark.' There were too many Smiths, and they were too well armed to be reasoned with successfully, so the upshot was that Melinda went home with her family, and Josiah and the parson went to see a lawyer.

"The next day Josiah brought a suit for divorce against Melinda. It was a friendly suit, you understand, and his only object was to test the question of the validity of his marriage, for, of course, no man can get a divorce unless he first proves that he is married. Old man Smith conducted the case on his side, and a lawyer named Starkweather, who is now a member of the Illinois Legislature, appeared for Josiah Wilson. Colonel Smith argued that while the parson who conducted the alleged marriage ceremony could undoubtedly have married a couple in the State of Indiana, he could not marry a woman in Indiana to a man in Illinois, for the reason that the man and the woman could not be in the same place while they were in two different commonwealths, and that hence Josiah and Melinda had not legally appeared together before the officiating minister. Furthermore, he argued that the minister at the time of the pretended marriage was standing neither in Indiana nor in Illinois, but on the boundary line; that the statute defined the boundary line as 'an imaginary line' running from such and such a point to such and such a point, and that a minister who stands in a purely imaginative locality stands virtually nowhere, and hence cannot perform any function of his calling.

"On the other hand, Josiah's lawyer claimed that the minister had married Melinda Smith in the State of Indiana; that consequently she must have been married to somebody, and that that somebody was unquestionably Josiah Wilson. As to the point that the minister stood in an imaginary locality because, as was alleged, he stood on the boundary line, the lawyer maintained that it was a physical impossibility that a minister weighing two hundred and fifty pounds could stand in a purely imaginative place. Moreover, he was prepared to prove that, while performing

the ceremony, at least one of the minister's feet was in the State of Indiana, which was sufficient to make him legally present in that State.

"The arguments lasted three days, and the court before which it was tried, consisting of three judges, took all the third day to deliver its verdict. It decided that Melinda Smith was legally married to some person unknown, though not to Josiah Wilson, and that Josiah Wilson was also married to some unknown woman, who was not Melinda Smith, whoever else she might be; that no marriage between the plaintiff and the defendant had ever taken place, and that no divorce could be granted, but that if either of them married anyone else, he or she would be guilty of bigamy.

"SHE WAS A GOOD DEAL CAST DOWN."

"The Smiths, with the exception of Melinda, were delighted with the decision, for it made it reasonably certain that Josiah could never be recognised as her husband. She was a good deal cast down about it, for, like every other Indiana girl, she had looked forward to being married and divorced as the natural lot of woman. Now it appeared that she was married, but in such an unsatisfactory way, that she could never have a husband, and never be divorced from anyone. As for Josiah, he was furious, but there was no help for it, the law was against him, and, as a law-abiding man, he was obliged to respect it, especially as he could not hope to kill off all four of the Smiths, if he decided to make a family feud of it; he himself having no family whatever, and no one to help him to keep up his end of the feud.

"For the next fifteen years Josiah lived a single man except in name, and Melinda mourned her hard fate and kept house for her father and brothers; but one day Josiah's lawyer, who was by this time in the Legislature, came to him and offered to have his marriage to Melinda made legal in all respects for five hundred dollars. The lawyer was so certain that he could do this that he was willing to wait for his pay until after he had gained a verdict, and Josiah, after a little bargaining such as every self-respecting man would have made, in his place, consented to the lawyer's terms. It seems that the lawyer had acci-

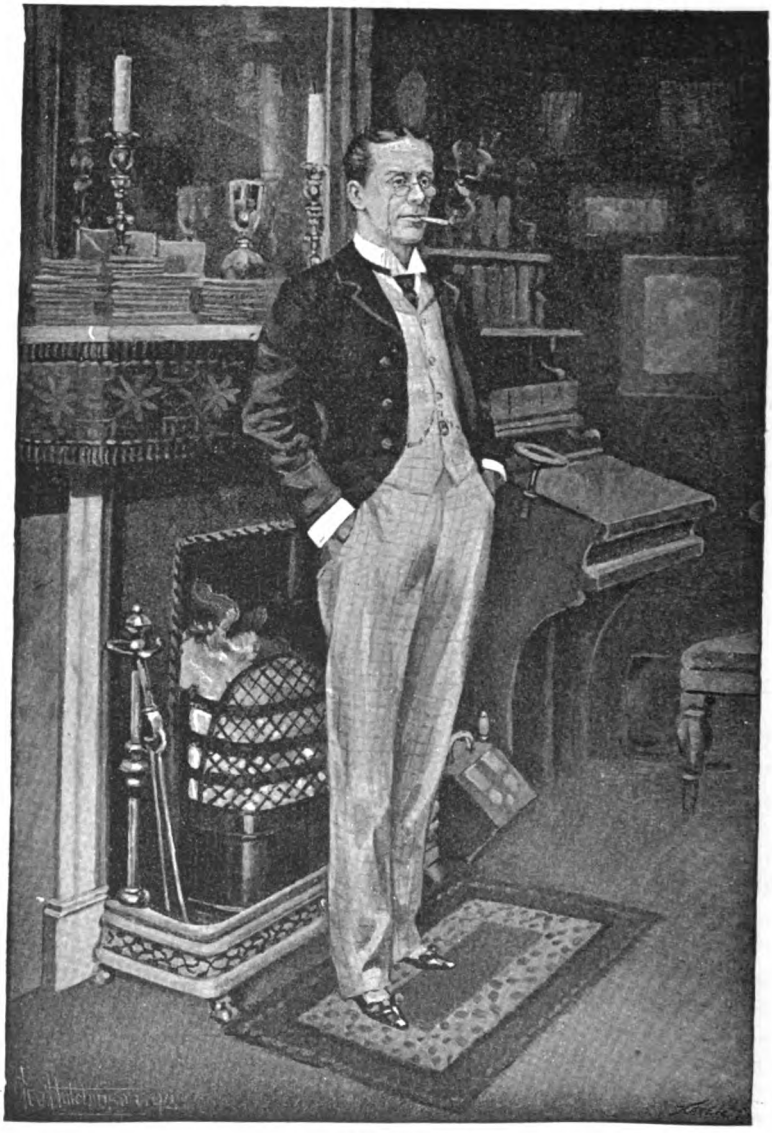
dentally discovered that there had been a mistake in the survey of part of the boundary line between Indiana and Illinois, and at the very place where Josiah and Melinda were married. A rectification of this mistake would move the line ten feet west, and so place the spot where the pair stood during their wedding

"OFFERED TO HAVE HIS MARRIAGE MADE LEGAL."

entirely within the state of Indiana. The proper steps to obtain the rectification of the boundary were taken, and it was rectified. Then Melinda in her turn began a suit for divorce against Josiah, and had no difficulty in proving the marriage and in obtaining a decree. Josiah paid the lawyer his five hundred dollars, and was overjoyed

at being finally able to call his Melinda his own. But he met with a little disappointment. Now that Melinda had obtained her divorce she thought she might as well live up to it, and marry a fresh husband. So she married the Methodist minister, who had just lost his third wife, and lived happily ever afterwards.

"It was just after this that Josiah, being perhaps made a little reckless by his disappointment, became involved in the affair that I was going to tell you about when you interrupted me, and wanted to hear about his marriage. Matrimony is a mighty curious thing, and you can never tell precisely how it is going to turn out. That is one reason why I was never married but once, though I spent ten years of my life in Chicago, and had friends at bar who stood ready to obtain divorces for me at any moment and without a dollar of expense."



MR. GEORGE GROSSMITH.

"Lions in Their Dens."

No. II.—GEORGE GROSSMITH AND THE HUMOUR OF HIM.

By Raymond Blathwayt.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.

(*Photographs by Messrs. Fradelle and Young and Alfred Ellis.*)

A LITTLE, slight man, with a thin, clever, mobile, clean-shaven face, a sharp inquisitive nose surmounted by a perpetual pair of *pince-nez*, and a rather sarcastic mouth, from which wit and humour as light and airy as the cigarette smoke which accompanied each remark continually flowed.

Mr. George Grossmith, the well-known actor and society clown.

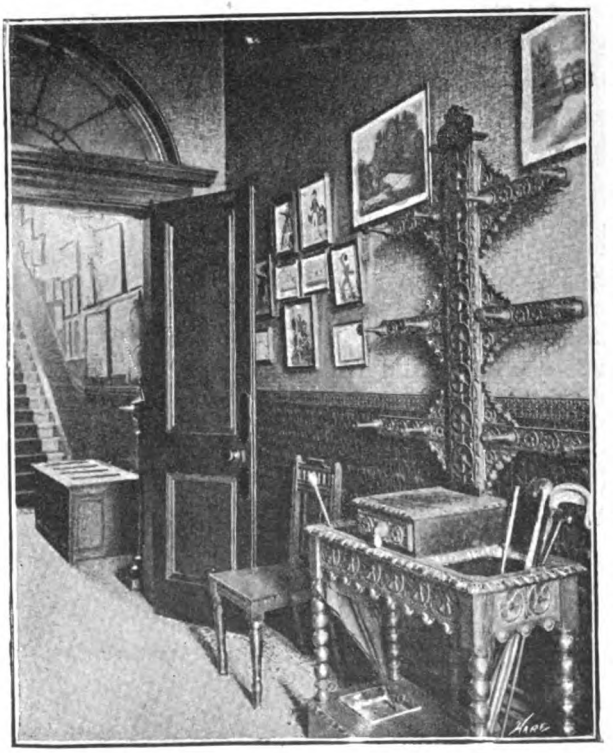
He stands on the hearthrug of his own special sanctum in his handsome house in Dorset Square, with his back to the fire, cigarette in his mouth, his hands now in his pockets, now waving in the air, as he vivaciously tells me the story of his busy, energetic and wonderfully interesting life.

MRS. GEORGE GROSSMITH.

"I was born," said he, "in 1847. I come of a family of actors and reciters. My father, whose portrait you see there on the wall, was a well-known lecturer and entertainer. Sixty or seventy years ago my uncle created a great sensation as a child actor, and he was commonly known as the 'celebrated infant Roscius.' Come out into the hall," continued the lively little entertainer, "and I will show you some old engravings which represent him in his favourite characters. Then my brother Weedon, as you know, is, of course, a well-known actor, as well as a clever artist, and part author with myself of several sketches which have appeared in *Punch*. My eldest son now begins to display the

family tendency to a most alarming extent. For my own part, I started my career as a reporter at Bow Street Police Court, a training which I have found invaluable in many respects ever since. My subsequent history as actor and society clown is so well known that I need not trouble you with it any further."

"I suppose you find the taste of your audiences has gone up considerably within the last twenty years, do you not?"



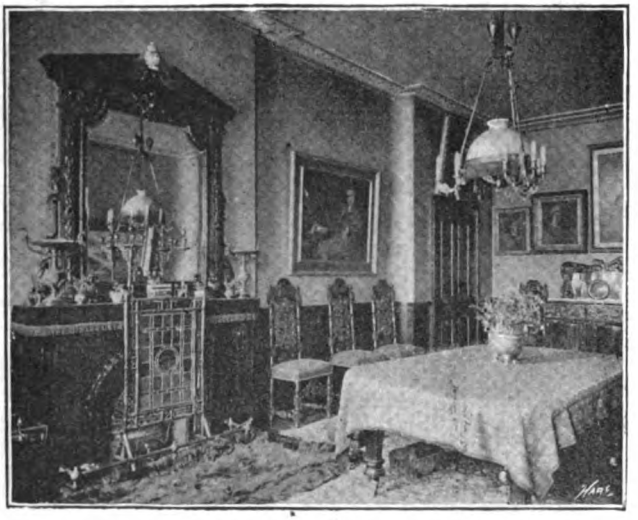
MR. GROSSMITH'S HOUSE.

"Why, yes, he replied. "They wouldn't stand to-day what they used to roar at then. My music is quite elaborate compared with the two or three chords which easily satisfied people in the sixties and early seventies. Listen to this," continued my host, as he sat down to the piano and struck a couple of very simple chords. Then he glided softly into what he termed a modern accompaniment. It was all the difference between "Ten Little Niggers" and a slumber song of Schubert.

"And do you find the public very critical?"

"Well," he replied, with a smile, "they are very kind. It is your professional critic who is severe, though I can honestly say they invariably treat me well. Criticism up to a certain point is good enough. Beyond that point it is absolutely disabling to me. My father was a very severe critic. When we went out together

he used to take the first half-hour, and then go to the back of the hall and criticise me. But it so hampered me by causing me to think of and consider every pose that I had to beg of him to desist. And then again, as regards criticism, I always think—it may be very conceited on my part—that I know a great deal more what the public want than my critics do. I declare to you I should have to take everything out of my sketches if I attempted to carry out all the suggestions that are made to me. I can absolutely feel the public pulse after so many years upon the platform. I am almost always right. When I first started 'See me Dance the Polka' it fell quite flat. I gave it up, although I felt sure it ought to go. The public then demanded it, and it went with a swing. The public had changed its mind. Not I."



THE DINING ROOM.

"And how do you prepare your sketches?" said I, as Mr. Grossmith lit another cigarette, and took up his position on the hearthrug again.

"Anyhow and anywhere the idea comes to me for a sketch. I am seated in a railway train, and I think of a sea-side sketch. I close my eyes and try to recall every single feature of interest on a crowded fashionable beach in the height of the season. Nothing is too unimportant. The way in which an old lady settles herself comfortably into her chair, the manner in which a man, especially a shy man, walks into the room, all these things, slightly exaggerated, but still true to nature, are immensely appreciated. First I have the idea, then I elaborate, sometimes for months, then I produce on the stage, and the people say,

'How remarkable it is you should invent all this on the spur of the moment!' That, of course, is a great compliment. The song-writing is always amusing," continued Mr. Grossmith, as he placed in my hand a little notebook in which were suggestions and elaborations innumerable. One thing I noticed, which he himself had condemned, but which was decidedly amusing, although it has never been allowed to see the light of day:

THE DRAWING-ROOM.

"I've been engaged to many,
Quite a score of times at least;
I don't think I with safety *can say*
Where I met my first *fiancée*.
Oh! 'tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all;
So I may say I have loved and *lost a lot*,
And my fickleness has *cost a lot*."

"Ah!" said Mr. Grossmith, as he leaned over me and saw what I was reading; "my better judgment told me that was not good enough for the public."

Then came a pencilled note in this little book, "You can take a

horse to water, but can't make him drink." "That gave me an idea," cried Mr. Grossmith, as he sprang to his feet. "'You can take a boy to the piano, but you can't make him play.' Thought I to myself, that would make a capital sketch. And here is how I set about it," continued he, as he proceeded to illustrate his remarks. "Imagine a little fellow in the corner there. I then begin in dumb show to encourage him to come to the piano. 'Come on, my boy; you know you can play that pretty piece you played yesterday. Come on, there's a good fellow!' Wonderful what you can do with persuasion! He refuses. I attempt to lead him to the piano. He won't budge an inch. I carry him under my arm and seat him in front of the instrument, the audience roaring all the time. At last his mistakes are so many and so ridiculous, I lose all patience and catch him a mighty box upon the ears! Tableau!! Of course there is no boy on the platform at all, I am quite alone, but I have so thoroughly lost myself in my imagination that people have de-

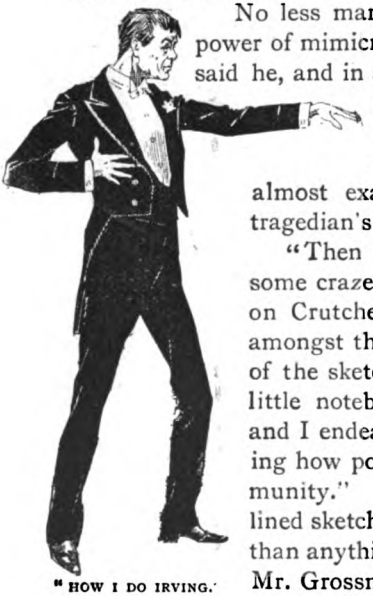
"I ATTEMPT TO LEAD HIM."

"I ENCOURAGE HIM."

"I CARRY HIM."

"I LOSE ALL PATIENCE."

clared years after, 'Oh! but I am quite sure you had a boy with you; why, don't you remember how you boxed his ears?'"



"HOW I DO IRVING."

No less marvellous than his power of acting is his power of mimicry. "I will show you how I do Irving," said he, and in a moment the little man had ruffled his hair, had assumed to the life not only Irving's peculiar gait, but, even more remarkable still, had managed to secure almost exactly the very expression of the great tragedian's face.

"Then again, I find it a good idea to take up some craze or topic of the moment. 'The Drama on Crutches' I wrote when the craze first arose amongst the aristocracy for going on the stage. One of the sketches which you will find outlined in that little notebook is entitled, 'Is Music a Failure?' and I endeavoured to answer the question by showing how popular it is among all classes of the community." I will quote pretty freely from this outlined sketch, as it will give my readers an idea, better than anything else would do, of the manner in which Mr. Grossmith prepares his delightful sketches.

"I am not going to treat the subject seriously," he writes, "but in my own particular, impertinent way. The question often arises—are we a musical nation? The foreigners think we are not. But where in the wide, wide world is there a country where you will hear so many organs and German bands? Where is the country, excepting ours, that can appreciate the concertina? Where, except in England, can you hear that delightful combination of harp and cornet outside a house of refreshment? The prejudice of other nations is distressing; and as for their ignorance, why, I don't suppose Italy and Germany have even heard of the ocarino and the Jew's harp."

And so the sketch runs on, until, in speaking of the universal manner in which music is appreciated in England by all classes, Mr. Grossmith goes on to say: "We have made rapid strides, so have our servants. They don't know how to dust the piano, but they can play it. Everybody plays the piano, from the Peerage to the School Board. Then look how music has crept into our homes and social circles. Besides the piano, the mother and daughters play the banjo, the son plays the first fiddle, and the father the second fiddle—as usual. I know of a Lord Mayor who plays the

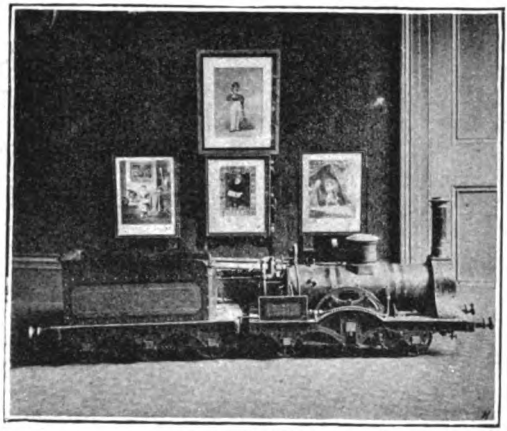
trombone, a clergyman who plays the big drum—that's a nice unpretentious, giddy instrument!—and I know of any number of members of Parliament who blow their own trumpets!!" And so the notes go brightly on through many pages.

THE STUDY.

"This," explained my host, "is a fair specimen of the method I employ in preparing a drawing-room sketch. As a rule, my audiences of that class are capital. I always love a well-dressed audience, it is so cheerful. You mayn't perhaps get as much applause as you do from the sixpenny gallery, but then applause often spoils your point. Once, however, I remember singing at a private house in the country to an odd assortment of people. I was informed that the party followed a wedding which had taken place in the morning. If it had followed a funeral it could not have been more gloomy and depressed than it was. I played the piano and the fool for three-quarters of an hour, and anything more dismal than the result it would be impossible to conceive. A temptation seized me suddenly, and I said: 'Ladies and gentlemen,—

MR. WEEDON GROSSMITH.

I am going to reveal to you a secret. Pray don't let it go any further. This is supposed to be a comic entertainment. I don't expect you to laugh at it in the least; but if, during the next sketch, you would only once oblige me with a society smile, it would give me a great deal of encouragement.' The audience for a moment were dumbfounded. They first began to titter, then to laugh, and actually to roar, and for a time I could not proceed with the sketch. They were transformed into a capital and enthusiastic audience, and the hostess told me that both her guests and herself were most grateful to me. I am sometimes amused with the little eccentricities of people who wish to secure my services for their parties. A gentleman once wrote to me to entertain some friends of his, and, added he, 'I trust that your



OLD ENGRAVINGS

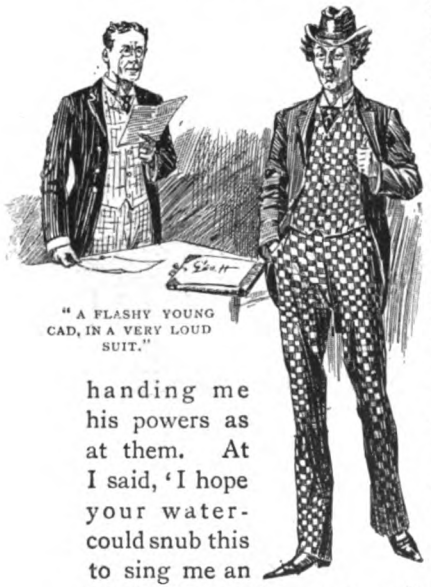
MR. GEORGE GROSSMITH.

sketches are strictly *comme il faut*, as I have several young daughters.' I was so immensely tickled by this that, rightly or wrongly, I replied that my entertainments *were* as they should be, for I was recently married, and hoped myself to have several young daughters. He wrote thanking me for this assurance, and I was to consider myself accordingly engaged. There is a story I tell in my book which will bear repetition: A young gentleman once called upon me. He explained that he was acting as a sort of ambassador for a friend of his, Mrs. ——, of Mayfair, who wished me to dine at her house. I replied that I had not the honour of the lady's acquaintance, and, though appreciating her kind invitation, I did not see how I could very well avail myself of it. He said that Prince Somebody or other and La Comtesse de So-and-so would be dining there, and Mrs. —— would be so pleased if I would join the party, and sing a little song after dinner. 'Oh,' I said, 'if Mrs. —— wishes to engage me professionally, that is another matter, and if I am at liberty, I will come with much pleasure.' 'Well,' said the ambassador, 'I fancy Mrs. —— is under the impression that if she includes you in her dinner party it is an understood thing that you sing afterwards.' 'I am afraid I do not understand that,' I said. 'It would not pay me to do so. I only consume about ten shillings worth of food and wine, and my terms are more than that.' There," said Mr. Grossmith, "could you have believed that anyone would have been so inconceivably mean and caddish?

MR. GEO. GROSSMITH, JUN.

"I have had some curious experiences on tour," he went on. "That is hard work, if you like. I have gone a four months' tour without missing a night. It takes it out of one terribly. But it is very paying work. In the South of England I have made as much as £300 a week. My friends tried to frighten me as to the apathy of my Scotch audiences; as a matter of fact, I have no better audiences anywhere. I like performing to country audiences. I am never nervous as I am apt to be at St. James's, where there are a number of my friends. And it is on my

country tours that I have many curious experiences. Amateurs invariably call at the hotel to see me, and to ask my advice as to their powers of recitation. Some are quite hopeless, and I haven't the heart to condemn them utterly, or to go beyond 'I tell you quite candidly, since you ask me, that I have heard better.' As a rule they are very quiet and modest, but now and again one encounters some fearful specimens. I remember once at a country town, which we will call Mudborough, a flashy young cad, in a very loud suit, called to see me with a parcel under his arm. He had come, he told me, to learn my opinion of his singing. He further informed me that he was known as 'the Mudborough Grossmith.' He didn't have the courtesy to take off his hat; he walked up and down my room, whistling, singing, and handing me over now and again specimens of his powers as a water-colour painter. I looked at them. At last, tired of the idiot and his airs, I said, 'I hope your musical sketches are better than your water-colour sketches.' Nothing, however, could snub this fellow. He proceeded straightway to sing me an improved version of 'See me Dance the Polka.' 'Do your audience like it?' I asked. 'I should think they did,' he replied; 'I will let you have that last verse if you like.' I thanked him sarcastically, and at last he withdrew. I have, however, come across some real talent in this way. For instance, that admirable actor and entertainer, Eric Lewis, is a *protégé* of mine, and you could not have a better man than he. Another amusing incident occurred at Southsea. My secretary was in a shop one day, and he overheard three ladies discussing the respective merits of Corney Grain and myself. Two of them were for Corney Grain and one was for me. Finding at last that the odds were too strong for her, she departed with this final shot: 'Well, never mind, Mr. Corney Grain can't jump on to a piano,' referring to my imitation of Minnie Palmer."



"A FLASHY YOUNG CAD, IN A VERY LOUD SUIT."

Replying to a question I put to him as to his theatrical experiences, Mr. Grossmith told me that it was in the November

of 1877 that he received the following letter:—

"Beefsteak Club,
"King William Street,
"Tuesday Night.

"Dear Mr. Grossmith,—Are you inclined to go on the stage for a time? There is a part in the new piece I am doing with Gilbert which I think you would play admirably. I can't find a good man for it. Let me have a line, or come to Albert Mansions to-morrow, after 4; or Thursday, before 2.30.

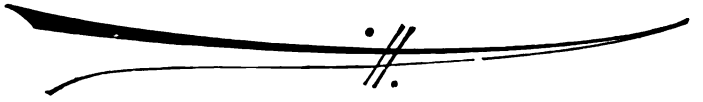
"Yours sincerely,
"ARTHUR SULLIVAN."

"This was a great moment in my life, although at the time my father, whose good judgment I valued much, was of opinion that I was not very successful as an actor. Sullivan, however, who had heard me give a musical sketch at a dinner party, was of the contrary opinion, and felt sure that I should suit him. It appears he and Arthur Cecil were both writing letters at the Beefsteak, when the former said, 'I can't find a fellow for this opera.' Cecil said, 'I wonder if Grossmith—' Before he had finished the sentence, Arthur Sullivan said, 'The very man!' And so I was engaged. I am much indebted to these two Arthurs," continued the bright little man with a laugh. "I reverence the very name of Arthur. I

remember when Gilbert wanted to engage me for the part of *John Wellington Wells*, though I saw the part would suit me to perfection, I said to him, 'I should have thought you required a fine man with a fine voice for the part of a magician.' I can still see Gilbert's humorous expression as he replied, 'That is just what we *don't* want.' I played *Sir Joseph Porter* in 'Pinafore' every night for nearly two years. Long runs don't affect the nerves of the actors nearly as much as they affect the performance. Constant repetition begets mechanism, and that is a terrible enemy to contend against. I make a point of playing my best to a bad house; for it is a monstrous thing to slur through one's work because the stalls are empty, and thereby punish those who *have* come for the fault of those who *have not*. Still, I repeat it, constant repetition is a dreadful thing. Fancy playing 'Pinafore,' as I did, for 700 nights without missing a single performance!"

As he said this Mr. Grossmith led the way out of the room in which we had been talking, and

which he told me was his own special sanctum, "into which no one is ever allowed to come except my wife, for anyone rushing in here when I was composing or thinking out a sketch would inevitably drive every single idea from my head," and we went upstairs together. Here in the drawing-room he set himself down to a spinet which bore the date of 1770, and he struck a few exceedingly sweet-sounding, if slightly tinkling, chords from it. "And this," said he, "is the oldest *Broadwood* in England. You can see for yourself the date—1795." Downstairs he showed me a beautiful model of a steam engine, upon which he was enabled to ride, and which he could drive himself. "I thoroughly understand locomotives," said he, as he pointed to a shelf full of all the works upon the subject which he had been able to discover.



A Blind Beggarman.

By Frank Mathew.

Illustrations by F. Pegram.

"Left dark among mine enemies."

"THE PIG WAS A FRIENDLY ANIMAL."

LONG ago, the Fairies often stole children; they chose the prettiest, and carried them to Fairyland—the Kingdom of Tyrnanoge—leaving hideous Changelings instead. In those days no man had call to be ashamed of his offspring, since if a baby was deformed or idiotic it was known to be a Changeling.

It is sixty years now since old Mike Lonergan, who lived in a hovel in Moher Village, was robbed of his child. It was his wife first found out the theft, for she had seen her unborn son in a dream, and he was beautiful; so when she saw the sickly and ugly baby, she knew that he was not hers, and that the Fairies had stolen the child of her dream. Many advised her to roast the Changeling on the turf-fire, but the White Witch of Moher said it would be safer to leave him alone. So the child Andy grew up as a stranger in his father's hovel and had a dreary time of it, he got little food and no kindness. The Lonergans gave him neither offence nor welcome, hoping that he might see fit to go home to Tyrnanoge and yet bear them no grudge. He grew up an odd wizened little wretch, and everyone shunned him. The children loathed him because they were afraid of him, so they hooted him from a distance, or stoned him from behind walls.

Indeed, at this time his only ally was the pig that lived in one corner of the hovel. The pig was a friendly animal, his front half was a dull white and the other half black, and this gave him a homely look as if he was sitting in his shirt-sleeves. Andy would shrink into the corner, and sit cuddled there with one arm round the pig's neck. Old Mike Lonergan took to drink, and spent every evening at the Shebeen—small blame to him—for how could a man be expected to stay at home with a Changeling sitting in a corner and staring at him?

When the pig was driven to the Fair at Ennistimon, Andy was left friendless, and then—in all winds and weather—was to be found on the Cliffs of Moher. Sometimes he stopped out all night, till hunger would bring him back when the Lonergans were rejoicing at his disappearance. He knew every inch of the Cliffs, and spent half his time lying on the edge of the grey precipice, looking down at the sea, six hundred feet below, or watching the clouds of sea-birds; he found new paths down the cliff-side and clambered like a goat; he knew where the gulls nested, but never robbed them, and the caves where the seals lived, and the seals shouldered their way through the water close by him, looking at him with soft eyes.

When he was about fourteen, the Famine Year came; fever and "The Hunger" swept Clare. The fever took Lonergan and his wife, and they were buried in the dead-pit at Liscannor; it left Andy, but it left him blind. Then the neighbours began to have their doubts whether he was a Changeling after all; for the Fairies are faithful, and who ever heard of a Changeling being left blind and penniless? If he was only mortal he had been cruelly treated, so to make amends they gave him the fiddle that had belonged to the "Dark" Man—that is the blind man—of St. Bridget's Well, who had lately starved. There was still a feeling that he was unfit for a Holy Well, so he took up a post at the Liscannor Cross-roads, and there levied a toll on passers with the professional heart-broken cry:

"Remember the Dark Man! For God's sake, remember the Dark Man!"

* * * *

For nearly twenty years Andy haunted the Cross-roads, he came to be honoured as one of the institutions of Moher, though the folk considered there was much that was uncanny about him, he was so silent, and he hated the smell of whisky.

Now those were the times when Cornelius Desmond ruled Moher in the old open-handed haphazard way, never troubling penniless tenants. But "Corney" died and the daisies grew over him, so the estate was managed by an agent who made short work of paupers, and evicted "Dark" Andy from his ancestral hovel. Andy did not seem to know his misfortune. He spent the day of the eviction, as usual, at the Cross-roads, and came back at night to a ruin. His neighbour, Larry Ronan the blacksmith, was grieved to see that he took the change as a matter of course, and that after groping in the four corners of the cabin he sat on the window-ledge as if unaware that nothing was left of his home but the walls.

Next day it was rumoured that Bridget McCaura, of Moher Farm, had sheltered Dark Andy. Bridget was a warm woman, a "woman of three cows," a masterful old maid, who in her time had refused many a pretty fellow, perhaps because she suspected them of hankering after her live stock, her poultry, and her sixty acres of rocks. Then the old parish priest, Father Peter Flannery, rode over to see her. Bridget was called out of her house to speak to him; he was afraid to dismount. She stood in the narrow gateway in front of her farm, with her arms akimbo, ready to defend her home against all comers. Peter's heart trembled; he has a great dread of angry women.

"Is it thrue?" he asked—and was so frightened that he looked even sterner than usual—"is it thrue what I'm afther hearing, Bridget McCaura, that ye've taken the Dark Man, Lonergan, to live with ye—to live in the Farm?"

"Is it thrue? 'Tis so," said Bridget.

"But ye're not going to keep him, are ye now?"

"Keep him? I am that," said Bridget.

Peter screwed up his courage and told her warily, that though it was well-meant of her, and "'tis you have the kind warm heart, Bridget me dear," still, that propriety forbade it.

He was afraid to look at her as he spoke. Bridget was purple.

"What! a misfortnit ould omadhaun the likes of that?" she cried.

"I know, I know," said Peter (this is a pet phrase of his and usually means that he does not know). "I know, I know, but 'tis because ye're a lone woman, tell me now are ye listening to me? If ye'd been married now, 'twould have been another thing."

"Married!" cried Bridget with infinite scorn—"Married! If that's all, I'll marry the craythur to-morrow!"

And so Dark Andy was married to the richest woman in Moher. He seemed indifferent; as for Bridget, she had made up her mind to shelter him, and there was an end of it, she took pleasure in astounding her neighbours.

"I'LL MARRY THE CRAYTHUR TO-MORROW!"

There was never such excitement in Clare as when those banns were read. Everyone saw that poor Bridget McCaura—"dacint woman"—had been bewitched. All the old stories about Dark Andy came to life, there was no room for doubt now, and the bravest unbelievers trembled before him. There was many a woman would never hear his name without crossing herself, and he got the credit of every misfortune between Kilkee and Kinvarra, though some doubted whether a blind man could have the Evil Eye. It was felt that he should be asked to give up his post

by the Cross-roads, since it was inconvenient for the neighbours to have to climb two stone walls to avoid passing him. However, no one could be found to suggest this to him, so he still sat there daily, for he liked to feel that he was earning his own livelihood.

* * * *

One rough afternoon during my first visit to Clare I was caught in a storm of rain, and took refuge at the Liscannor Cross-roads under a thick clump of trees that are stunted and bent eastward by cowering from the sea-wind. As I reached them I heard a shrill cry, "Remember the Dark Man!" Then I saw the blind beggarman sitting huddled in a ragged great-coat so much too big for him that till he stood up I did not see how tiny he was. He had a doleful peaked face, set in a shock of grey hair. By him sat a little brown dog—the queerest of mongrels—with a tin can tied round his neck.

Andy was friendly that day, and talked eagerly in a shrill, stammering voice. I found later that he was wretched in still weather, and loved the malicious rush of the rain; he was happiest when the wind rattled in his ears and the rain whipped his face. "Call that rain?" he said, "sure th' air is flooded, an' ye might as well swim as walk."

Many times after that I went out of my way on my long solitary walks to pass the Cross-roads, but as often as not he was glum and silent, and then Bonaparte, sharing his mood, would growl like a small thunderstorm. The seat was well chosen, for the cowering trees are like a shed over it, and there is a pleasant landscape in front (though that mattered little to Andy), a landscape of dim green moors—with brown stains on them where sedge grows and black shadows where bushes huddle in clefts—chequered by a grey net of low walls, dotted with the white gables of cabins, and framed by a wavering line of hills.

Sometimes I found him playing his fiddle to keep himself company, but he stopped when he heard me, and, to tell the truth, I was glad of it, for his playing was uncanny. Sometimes I met him shambling along the brink of the Cliffs—a grotesque little figure, with his old shapeless hat, his huge coat flapping behind him, and the mighty blackthorn he carried—he knew the ground so well that he walked as if he could see (indeed, he saw more than I could, for while to me the breakers were only

streaks of light, he spoke as if he was close to them on the wet weedy rocks), or I came on him lying by the edge, listening to the grumbling of the breakers and the cries of the gulls.

"LISTENING TO THE GRUMBLING OF THE BREAKERS AND THE CRIES OF THE GULLS.'

Mostly he was unsociable, he shrank from his neighbours because they had been cruel to him when they were children, and

the dislike was more than returned; yet I think that, but for the loneliness of his whole life, he would have been friendly enough. No one knew more of folklore—I think he half believed that he was a Changeling, and found comfort in the thought of that former life when he was one of the merry "Little Good People"—and sure old Mike Lonergan and his wife ought to have known best. He knew the ways of every ghost in the county, and it was even said that he was on speaking terms with the Headless Man who

"HE WAS ON SPEAKING TERMS WITH THE HEADLESS MAN OF LISCANNOR."

haunted Liscannor. Of course he knew all about Fairies. When the fallen leaves scurried past his feet he knew that the "Little Good People" were playing football, when the wind whispered in the leaves overhead he heard them chatting, and when it whined in the creaking bare branches, heard the poor little folk crying with cold and bewailing the days when they found shelter by snug firesides and sat there unseen but not unwelcome. Once, before the world grew hard, they gathered in the cabins, and the roughest fare grew pleasanter, the saddest hearts lighter,

from their good wishes; but no one cares for them now, and they cannot rest in unfriendly houses.

As he grew older, he talked more of them, grew more moody and restless, could not sit quiet while the wind was up, and spent night after night out of doors. My friend Father Peter Flannery, who is my chief authority for this history, told me that often, riding on his sick calls in stormy weather, he met Andy staggering along the rough roads.

Last year on November Eve—the night when the Fairies have power, and the dead wake and dance reels with them—the blind beggarman started out from the Farm. An Atlantic gale was shattering seas against the Cliffs, the air was salt with foam, and throbbed with the pulse of the breakers. Bridget tried in vain to stop him; he said the "Little Good People" were calling him. She watched him disappear into the darkness, the whimpering of his fiddle died into the shrieks of the wind. "'Tis a quare divil, he is," she said, "God help him!"

Once in the night she thought she heard a snatch of the "Fairies' Reel"; but Andy never came back. Next morning they found Bonaparte whining on the edge of the Cliffs; there was no sign of his master. He must have gone over the Cliffs in the darkness, but the waves gave no token.

Some folk in Moher believe that the Fairies took back their child, and that the old blind fiddler lives now in the Kingdom of Tyrnanoge, and makes music for their dances in that enchanted country where the old grow young and the blind see. Some say that he still haunts the Cross-roads, and only a week ago, Larry Ronan, coming back at night from Ennistimon Fair, saw a black shadowy figure under the black trees, and heard a heart-broken voice cry "Remember the Dark Man!" Larry's natural surprise at this accounted for his being found next morning asleep in the ditch. But it is agreed in Moher that Andy left life on November Eve, whether he became the playfellow of the Fairies or the plaything of the waves.

MR. IRVING AS "HAMLET.

From the Portrait by EDWIN LONG.

Church and Stage.

A REVIEW OF HENRY IRVING.

By the Rev. Dr. Joseph Parker.

With Illustrations from F. Barnard and J. Bernard Partridge.

THE innumerable reviews of Mr. Irving by literary and artistic experts have left room enough for an amateur estimate by a man who is accustomed to regard human life mainly from a religious standpoint. A complete review of the Stage by the Pulpit could hardly be the work of a single pen; for my own part, therefore, I can only make a very small contribution to such a review by indicating a few points which have occurred to me in the study of one particular actor. At once, however, the question arises, Is Mr. Irving a man who can be thus summarily characterised? In a dramatic sense, are there not many Mr. Irvings? When a man can act "The Two Roses" and "The Dead Heart" with equal effect, when he can at will be as vulgar as *Robert Macaire*, or as dignified as *Cardinal Wolsey;* when he can be either as young as *Hamlet* or as old as *Lear*, the inquiry as to his plurality becomes natural and pertinent. For my part, I rank Mr. Irving the comedian above Mr. Irving the tragedian, just as I rank Nature above Art: each may be highest in its own way, yet the one may have a charm which the other cannot boast. Mr. Irving's tragedy sometimes requires working up, but his comedy is spontaneous and immediate. The needful working up of tragedy is no fault of the actor. Tragedy should hardly ever begin at once. The murder may come too soon. Premature rage is followed by

MR. IRVING AS "DIGBY GRANT" IN "TWO ROSES."

untimely laughter. *Digby Grant* begins at once, and can be his best self in the very first sentence, but *Macbeth* must move towards his passion by finely-graded ascents. In Mr. Irving's exquisite representation, *Macbeth's* anxieties and perturbations, his rapid alternations of courage and cowardice, make delicate but obvious record of themselves in deepening the grey of his hair, and ploughing more deeply the lines of his face. A comedy may be judged scene by scene, almost sentence by sentence, but a tragedy can be truly estimated only when viewed in final perspective.

Judged by this test, I have no hesitation in regarding Mr. Irving's *King Lear* as the finest creation of his genius. This is an instance in which the actor creates the piece. Shakespeare is, as a poet and playwright, at his worst in "King Lear." Yet his accessories are wonderful in variety and suggestiveness. Only Shakespeare could have created the heath, and have so ordered the old King's passion, as to make his madness part of the very thunder and lightning. That was Shakespeare's magnificent conception, and Mr. Irving's rendering is worthy of its tempestuous grandeur. How to talk up to the storm, how to pierce the tumult with the cries of human distress, how to escape the ridiculous and the incongruous, how to be a King on the desolate heath, and to make the royalty gleam through the angry darkness, were the problems, and Mr. Irving solved them one and all, even with redundance of faculty and skill. At the end of the heath scene the man is more remembered than the storm. It has been objected that in the first scene Mr. Irving's *Lear* is too old and feeble. I venture to think otherwise. I further venture to think that the King's age and the King's imbecility have both been accurately appreciated. A man at eighty, a man athirst for flattery, a man who would pay a kingdom in exchange for

"A LITTLE CHEQUE."
(MR. IRVING AS "DIGBY GRANT" IN "TWO ROSES.")

adulation, must have outlived all that is best and strongest in human nature. He comes upon the stage as a wreck. His vanity has eaten up his sagacity, so that she, *Goneril* or *Regan*, who can flatter most, can lie most, and can play the devil best, shall fare most lavishly at his hands. Is it not well partly to excuse these excesses of self-valuation by such mitigations as can be found in the infirmity of old age? Even in an elderly man they would have been treated with contempt; they could only be endured in one whose eighty years had been doubled by the hardness of his life lot.

In "Henry VIII." Mr. Irving had little to do. In that play the labour and the glory fell upon another, to the infinite delight of the public. In "Lear," Mr. Irving has everything to do. From beginning to end there is only one character. Even the fascinating *Cordelia* is but a silver cloud on the far horizon. "The King is coming" is the cry of the play. His madness is more, as to display and effect, than the sense of all the others. The scene is stiff and cold until his wild hair is observed to approach the front, and then the whole spectacle is alight with feeling and purpose. The other actors are not to blame that, to a large extent, they are thrown into the shade; indeed, they are to be warmly congratulated upon their self-suppression and their passive sympathy. It is a hard task to play the part of two heartless and treacherous daughters, and a pitiful fate to have to represent the villainy of *Edmund*, yet all this was admirably done. It cannot be an easy thing to come forward to play the villain well, for the better the dramatic villain is played the more is the actor compelled to recognise in his execration the exact degree of his success. So admirably can Mr. Irving himself play the villain, that it is difficult to believe that any godparents ever, on his unconscious behalf, renounced the pomps and vanities of this wicked world

In many minor parts—or along the subsidiary lines of great parts—Mr. Irving's subtlest power comes into effective play. Who, for example, can be more gentle or more graceful with a little child? Who could hug the "fool" more fondly than old *King Lear?* Then recall his wonderful recognitions of old friends. When, in "The Dead Heart," he is liberated from the Bastille, how old times slowly but surely dawn into consciousness, and how quickly the dawn hastens into the noontide of the tenderest fellowship and highest festival of joy. It is verily a resurrection. After eighteen years' entombment this political Lazarus comes forth to liberty, to leadership, to dominance.

In "Lear," there are two wonderful instances of recognition, the recognition of *Gloster* and of *Cordelia*. *Gloster* is blind and bandaged. *Cordelia* has been long out of sight—if not in actual days yet in depth of feeling—and the King himself is demented. Little by little things shape themselves in the memory and fancy of the King. There is something confusedly familiar in the voice of *Gloster* which, tone by tone, settles into recognition. In the case of *Cordelia* the father gradually subdues the King, and instinct takes the place of reason; then, in a fine strain, comes the identification:

MR. IRVING AS "KING LEAR."
(FROM THE LYCEUM SOUVENIR.)

> "Do not laugh at me,
> For, as I am a man, I think this lady
> To be my child Cordelia."

The utterance of these words by Mr. Irving is simply thrilling. The tones, the glances, the approach, the embrace, lift up the words into new light, keen and tender as the brightness of a summer morning. The words themselves are by no means striking, are, indeed, the merest commonplace, but, uttered with the natural pathos of a consummate actor, they carry the play to its most subduing climax. The humanity and the genius satisfy expectation in its most eager and jealous temper. Failure at that point would have ruined the play. Which was better, *Lear* or *Cordelia*, in that critical action? We must first settle, Which is better, the star of morning or the morning star?

* * * *

As I opened this brief review with a reference to the religious standpoint, it may be well now to ask how the Church is to regard the Stage as an educational institution? The Stage cannot be put down. It responds to an instinct which is ineradicable, and which need not be ignoble. The parables of the New Testament are the sublimest recognition of that instinct. The drama is older than the theatre. Much of the greatest preaching has been dramatic, by which I mean that it has touched human life through the medium

of story and parable, coloured and toned by a living fancy. Sometimes, too truly, the dramatic in preaching has degenerated into impossible anecdotes, most of them originating in the Far West of America, yet even such anecdotes testify to the overpowering force of the dramatic instincts when limited to their most vulgar conditions. My submission is, that a properly-conducted stage might be the most powerful ally of the pulpit. I advance upon this submission, and contend that the function of the preacher is infinitely superior to the function of the actor. Whatever the preacher has to say that is distinctive he can trace to what he believes to be a Divine and authoritative origin. I hold the great preacher to be a spiritual medium. In his next evolution he will simply tell the people whatever may have been given him in the same hour to say. This does not mean that indolence will supersede industry. Through the indolent man God sends no messages. The true prophet will always be preparing himself. By learning, by meditation, by self-discipline, the true prophet will prepare his heart for the incoming of the Eternal Spirit, and the glory of Heaven will be as a fire on the altar of the honest heart. Art preachers we have had in too great abundance. Mechanical talkers have brought upon the pulpit the disrepute of dulness. The age now waits for the messenger in whose loving heart there is the glow and the radiance of divinest sympathy. The great actor himself would be the first to admit that the preacher cannot trace his own public secondariness to the poverty of his themes. Where the preacher falls behind the actor, it is because the preacher does not realise the majesty and the tenderness, the vehemence and the urgency, of his own message.

That Beast Beauty.

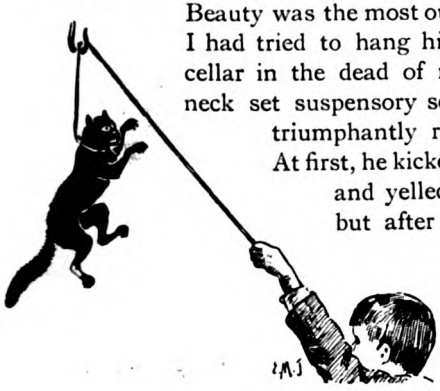
By Kirby Hare.

Illustrations by Ernest M. Jessop.

I WAS a man born to misfortune. In fact, my first misfortune, the death of my father, happened three months before I came into the world. When I did duly appear, and was giving a proper howl of disgust, a fresh misfortune fell upon me; my mother departed to join my father, leaving me in the lurch in a vale of unavailing tears. I should have preferred going with my family to that blessed Utopia where there are neither births, deaths, marriages, divorces, breaches of promise, nor return tickets; only, unfortunately, I was not invited. So I became a posthumous orphan, soothed by Daffy's elixir and the skim-milk of human kindness. The milk was none too sweet, human kindness did not spare the rod, and I firmly believe it was Daffy's elixir that turned my hair red. However, I grew up at length into stand-up collars and tail coats, and at the age of seventeen springs was adopted (on trial) by a maiden aunt of seven-and-forty autumns. Like a gleam of sunshine hope flashed into my loveless life, lighting up my path to fortune. But it was only the glimmer of an *ignis fatuus*, which led me into a quicksand and snuffed itself out in a fog.

My relative had plenty of money, and plenty of other equally good qualities in the long run, no doubt; but the period of my adoption was too short to make sure of either the one or the other. If the wealthy maiden was really a worthy soul she did not let her nephew know it. Corporeally she was angular and iron-grey, with a summary tongue and wintry temper, chastened by a fondness for feline favourites. Unluckily, I was always falling foul of the latter, and my aunt continually fell foul of me in consequence. Crabbed age and youth could not live together in our case on account of cats. Age, as represented by the mature virgin, adored the brutes; youth, in the shape of a sprouting hobbledehoy, abhorred them altogether, and one evil-minded black Tom in particular. My aunt called him Beauty, in happy ignorance that all her household called him a Beast. I admire beauty in the abstract; I also like it in the concrete; and in the concreted form of youthful feminine humanity I love it. But that feline black Beauty was the most outrageous misnomer unhanged. I had tried to hang him several times, down in the cellar in the dead of night; but his patent cast-iron neck set suspensory science at defiance, and Beauty triumphantly refused to give up the ghost. At first, he kicked and fought against it lustily, and yelled murder with all his might; but after a little practice the malefactor acted more philosophically, regarding the performance quite as part of his nocturnal programme. He never allowed it to make him late for breakfast, nor take away his appetite. Each morning, after execution, the moment the bell rang for prayers, in marched Beauty with a swollen head well on one side, growling anathemas from somewhere round the corner all prayer-time; after which the escaped convict devoured breakfast with the voracity of a stiffnecked cannibal.

ONE EVIL-MINDED BLACK TOM.



Finding the beast utterly unhangable, I determined to try

drowning. My nature is by no means a cruel one, quite the reverse; but Beauty's cup of iniquity had long been full to the brim, and running over into the saucer. He had gulped down my canaries like pills, poached my pigeons, fricasseed my rabbits, and made himself an abominable beast generally; and had now committed a crime that capped everything.

My cock bantam, which had won first prize at the Slocum-Pogis poultry show, mysteriously disappeared. Jim, the gardener's boy, and I hunted everywhere without finding any trace till we sighted Beauty. The beast was seated on my verbena bed, with fearfully distended stomach, waving my poor little bantam's tail feathers from between his teeth. Had I been an ancient Egyptian high priest, and Beauty at the top of the tree of holy cats, his diabolical godship should have been made into a mummy instanter. As things were, he had to be drowned forthwith.

At a cabinet council in the coal cellar, composed of the cook, footman, Jim, and myself, all the executive details were arranged; my aunt being, of course, kept in happy ignorance of our inten-

AT A CABINET COUNCIL IN THE COAL CELLAR. E. Jessop

tions. As soon as my respected relative uttered the preliminary snore of her afternoon siesta, Beauty made an involuntary exit out of the house, all the lower doors and windows having been carefully fastened. Then commenced a silent cat-hunt, a serio-comic drama in dumb show, with a crowded audience breathlessly gazing from the windows. The scenery was a series of dissolving views, beginning on a flower-decked lawn, and ending at a mill-pool a mile or so away from the audience. Beauty played leading actor

with considerable activity, notwithstanding the drawback of being handicapped with an undigested bantam. He flew over dozens of flower-beds, through all the outhouses, over the stable, out into the park, up and down all the tallest trees, and all over the country, till he took refuge in the deserted old mill. There we wriggled him into an ancient sack, and tied him up in the harmonious company of a couple of brickbats. Then we committed the body to the deep. The burial service was short, but hearty. "One —two—three, and away!" sung out in unison, was the special form for the occasion, accompanied by Beauty's farewell blessing as we "awayed" him into the silent depths of the mill-dam. There was a splash, a shrill cry from a frightened moorhen, a short jubilate from Jim, to which I piously added "amen," and all was over. Jim ran home with half-a-sovereign in his pocket, while I walked back to dress for dinner. On the stairs I met my aunt, already in evening array, and looking hungry. I knew the sign, and stealthily tried to vanish, vainly.

In the deserted old mill.

"Late again, Samuel!" she remarked, with a freezing spectacle-gleam that fixed me to the stair-carpet—my right foot two steps above the left. "You have just come in, I suppose. Have you seen Beauty?"

Horror! Could she suspect anything? I felt my face growing the colour of my hair, and my tongue frozen solid.

"Can't you answer?" she went on wrathfully. "And can't you stand up straight?"

"Late again, Samuel!"

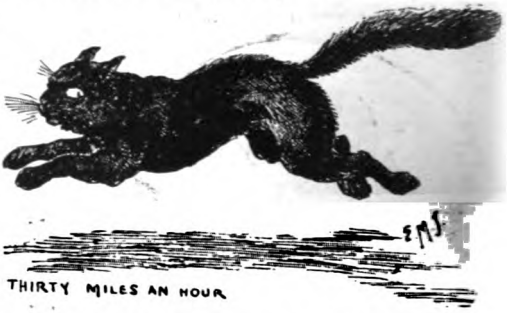
I pulled my legs together and commenced to stammer.

"I—I saw Beauty out-outside, aunt, in the garden," I managed to mutter.

"Which way was he going?"

"Why, I think he was running towards the house, aunt."

And then the remembrance of how he *was* running—thirty miles an hour, with tail on end and ears flat to his head, with Jim and my long-legged self racing in rear—made me choke with laughter I was forced to swallow. But my aunt's eyes were on me, and her gold-rimmed barnacles blazed through me, so I suffocated in silence.



THIRTY MILES AN HOUR

"Don't stand making faces like an idiot. Go and dress, and be quick," snapped my loving relative, as she marched away downstairs and I flew to the region above.

My bedroom door was partly open, and I dashed in hastily, pulling off my things as I went.

My evening clothes were laid out ready on the bed, and—what was that on my shirt?—a black mass of—something moving!—some animal! Why, heavens and earth, it was the ghost of—that beast Beauty! It was Beauty himself! I ran for the poker; Beauty rushed out of the door. Confound that rotten old sack!

DRESSING FOR DINNER.

I was late for dinner, and found Beauty seated in my chair, sleek and dry, with a ravenously whetted appetite. My aunt was so pleased with her favourite's improved appearance that she became quite affable, even to me. I was informed that as I had not been looking well lately I might go for a few days' change to the seaside; the salubrious air of Muddiford-on-the-Ooze would just suit me. What a blessing! To have escaped from those ice-gleaming spectacles and from that resuscitated beast Beauty I would gladly have gone to Jericho, much more to Muddiford-on-the-Ooze. Then my aunt continued her course of instructions, with the nearest approach to a smile I had ever seen on her face.

"You will enjoy yourself, I am sure, Samuel, and you will also be able to show what pains you can take to please me," she said,

A SHOW AT MUDDIFORD-ON-THE-OOZE.

sipping her first glass of Burgundy with approving relish. "There is to be a show at Muddiford the day after to-morrow, at which I intend exhibiting, and you will be able to manage everything for me; so mind you are careful to do your best."

"I shall be most delighted," I declared gushingly. "What show is it? And what can I have the pleasure of taking charge of for you, my dear aunt?"

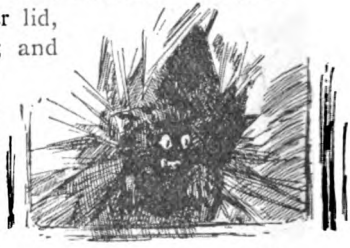
"It's the Grand All-England Cat Show, and you will take Beauty; and I shall be greatly disappointed if you do not bring me back the first prize. So be on your best behaviour, Samuel, or perhaps you may live to regret it."

My jaw dropped, and I thought I should have slid under the table. Good heavens! It was that beast Beauty who was to go for a holiday, while I was to act as the infernal fiend's keeper! O my prophetic soul—my aunt! But there was no help for it; I was bound in bonds of gold.

On the following day, Beauty and I were duly driven to the station, the former being luxuriously nested in a small hamper specially furnished for the occasion. About half-way on the road, just as we had mounted a long, steep hill, the cat managed to roll his residence from the stern of the dog-cart and trundle himself half-way home again. Luckily, he screeched blue murder at the tip-top of his voice, or we might not have missed the beast. As it was, his cyclical retrogression made us just too late for the train, and we had to wait two hours for the next. So I seated myself on the hamper—like Patience on the proverbial monument—and beheld the coachman depart homewards, with a sympathetic hat-touching salute, leaving me with a gloomy conviction of coming misfortune. The train, when it did arrive, was tolerably empty, and I secured a vacant first-class. For a time all went happily; then the cat commenced groaning.

SEATED MYSELF ON THE HAMPER

My aunt having solemnly ordered me to give the brute dinner, I now prepared to stop his mouth with cold chicken. While I was cautiously unfastening the hamper lid, and Beauty remained quiet as a dormouse; then he proceeded personally to assist the unfastening, with a vengeance. There was a bouncing volcanic eruption, a blood-curdling howl, a mixed-up whirling round the carriage, and then—smash!—bang through the window went Beauty!—leaving me doubled up on the seat, holding out half a chicken. It was a forty-feline-power hurricane, while it lasted; and drops of perspiration trickled down my nose on to the chicken, at which I sat stupidly staring. After a dazed pause I staggered to the broken window and looked out. There was Beauty, with a perpendicular tail like a young fir-tree, going like great guns in exactly the wrong direction. We had just come through a long tunnel, and the last I saw of my aunt's pet demon was as he dived headlong into its Hades-like mouth. And I had to take home first prize for him from the Grand All-England Cat Show!



LEAVING THE RAILWAY CARRIAGE

INTO ITS HADES-LIKE MOUTH.

When the 4.40 down express arrived at Muddiford-on-the-Ooze station, an auburn-haired youth limply emerged from a first-class carriage. In his arms he bore a basket, and his grey-green eyes gleamed with incipient catalepsy. Yes, such would undoubtedly have been my description had I posed as the momentary hero of a penny novelette. I forgot all about my luggage, imbecilely clinging to the late habitation of the lost beast Beauty, wandering I knew not why nor whither. Outside the station, round a quiet corner, my steps were arrested by the surprising sight of—Beauty!—the very

INCIPIENT CATALEPSY

WASHING HIS FIENDISH FACE!

identical devil himself! There stood the unhangable, undrownable, hurricane-creating beast, looking as serene as a newly-born black cherub, washing his fiendish face! I approached on tiptoe, breathlessly, with the basket behind my back and the half chicken extended as a peaceable card of introduction. He scented it instantly—my aunt always keeping Beauty's tit-bits until sufficiently gamey to suit his highly epicurean taste.

With a finishing toe-touch to his whiskers, he amicably trotted up to me and—yes!—actually rubbed against my new trousers! What could have happened to him! Had his run through the tunnel turned him out virtuous? And how could he possibly have got here? Experience has shown that a leopard can change his spots, and a negro can grow spotted; but could a diabolical cat become even as a sucking dove and fly over twelve miles all in the space of twenty minutes? Impossible! So I put on a pair of folder-glasses and scrutinised this new arrival doubtingly. No; it was *not* Beauty—not nearly ugly enough. It was a twin, but larger, blacker, sleeker, a million times more amiable, and very much fatter. Ah!—ha, ha!—hurrah!—happy thought! Why not? I would. And, thereupon, I instantly did it.

Placing the basket gently on the ground, I opened the lid and put in the cold chicken, when lo! in jumped the amiable twin. Half an hour later that basket, that heaven-descended twin, and that successful chicken, were safely deposited in custody of the cat-show steward, with the errant Beauty's entry ticket affixed. If the steward had never seen the real original he would never discover the difference; and if he did happen to be acquainted with the genuine article he could but think that the beast was surprisingly improved, and might even award it first prize for having turned over such a notable new leaf. And for the same reason, my aunt ought to be highly delighted at her favourite's favourable transformation. My heart was lightened of its oppressive troubles, as my hands were free from their feline load. With a hearty appetite I ate an excellent dinner at the hotel, went to the theatre, and turned into bed thankful for all fortune's favours.

During the two following days, carefully steering clear of the cat-show, I enjoyed my freedom gaily, and had—what our three-thousand-miles-removed cousins would call—a real good time. On the third morning a letter arrived from my aunt, with an enclosure which for the first moment I took to be a big cheque—a grateful offering, as I hoped, for services skilfully performed. However, it proved to be merely a second letter, in writing that was strange to me, and which with some curiosity I proceeded to peruse. As I unfolded the sheet, a vision suddenly crossed my mind of that savage beast Beauty; a chilly shiver shot through my marrow, and I sent the waiter for soda and brandy. It was an awful thought of what that unkillable cat might do! There he was, rampaging over a civilised country populated with children and lambs, and other unprotected innocents, half mad, perhaps, with hunger, where neither canaries nor pigeons, rabbits or cold chicken were grabbable. What desperate murders he might commit! And should I be held responsible? Here the timely arrival of the waiter helped to raise my spirits by a strong dose of B. and S., and I began the enclosed letter.

I ATE AN EXCELLENT DINNER.

What desperate murders he might commit!

It was headed from the cat-show secretary's office. Why, of course, that charming twin had got first prize, no doubt. Let us see. "Dear Madam," so ran the official note, "I beg to call your attention to what I imagine must, in some way, have been an oversight. Your cat, described on the entrance form as 'a black male, named Beauty,' which was, on the evening of its arrival, placed in the class pertaining to the descriptive form, was found this morning to have presented us with four remarkably fine kittens. This, of course, necessitated the family's removal from the male cat class. I have much pleasure

in being able to inform you that both mother and kittens are in the best of health, and will be carefully attended upon. If you will kindly forward your instructions respecting their disposal, I shall be greatly obliged." That was the note, and wildly did the letters dance before my eyes.

FOUR REMARKABLY FINE KITTENS.

Having saved myself from fainting by finishing the B. and S., I sat for some minutes gasping for breath. Then I rubbed my eyes and reread that awful epistle. Yes — it was so — in solemn, sober black ink! Beauty's twin had got four fine kittens! Great Jehoshaphat! How could I ever get over those confounded kittens! It was too late to murder them. And my aunt—but stop! Let me read her letter; it might suggest something—some feline legerdemain method of conjuring four fine kittens into a first prize black male cat. So here goes. And this is how it went: "I always considered you to be a fool, Samuel, but nothing worse, until now. Unless the enclosed letter is immediately fully explained, and the matter set right, I shall plainly let you know what I do think of you now, and act accordingly. See the secretary, and telegraph me the result at once." Not much hope in that, worse luck; only a limited respite.

GASPING FOR BREATH

WENT FISHING

Away I went to the show, saw the secretary—from a safe distance—and immediately telegraphed: "Have seen the secretary. Hard at work setting matters right. Awfully sorry." Then I hired a boat, and went fishing for the rest of the day. In the evening I wired: "Beauty must have got changed. Cats now all going home. Found clue and am following up. All right

shortly." But my aunt's patience had expired. Next morning came a curt note saying she would at once join me, and either rescue Beauty or settle that secretary. How could I ever face those searching spectacles! I fled. From a lonely spot on the wilds of Dartmoor I wired: "Am following clue sharp. Getting close up. Good news next time." Back came an answer: "Shall be with you to-morrow at noon." At noon next day, I boarded the mail packet Tongariro, bound from Plymouth to New Zealand.

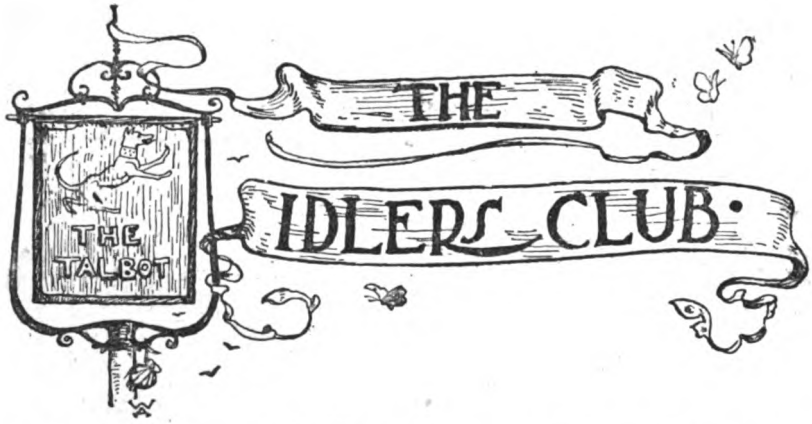
OFF TO NEW ZEALAND.

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

MRS. HUMPHRY WARD.

"You can do nothing by despising the past and its products; you also can do nothing by being too much afraid of them. . . . . Be content to be a new 'sect,' 'conventicle,' or what not, so long as you feel that you are *something*, with a life and purpose of its own, in this tangle of a world."—*Robert Elsmere.*



Is Love a Practical Reality or a Pleasing Fiction?

Mrs. Lynn Linton thinks there is no doubt as to Love's reality.

Of the desperate reality of the passion there is no doubt; of the intrinsic value of the thing beloved there may be many. The passion for which men and women have died stands like a tower four-square to all the winds of heaven; but how far that tower has been self-created by fancy, and how much is objectively real, who is the wise man that can determine? What is Love? We know nothing of its source. Sense and sex cannot wholly explain its mystery, else would there be no friendship left among us; and elective affinity is but a dainty carving on the chancel stalls. The loveliness which makes that special person the veritable Rose of the World to us exists but in our imagination. It is no rose that we adore—only at the best a bedeguar, of which the origin is a disagreeable little insect. We believe in the exquisite harmony of those atoms which have arranged themselves to form the thing we love. And we marry our human ideal, expecting the unbroken continuance of that harmony. But the discord comes; colours clash; the jarring note spoils the chord; the idol once accepted as of gold and precious stones, proves to be only common clay, thinly gilt. The diamonds are paste; the pearls are beads of glass filled with shining fishes' scales; and the love which we thought would be a practical reality for life, is nothing but a pleasing fiction, good for its day, and now dead and done with. The lover sees nothing as it is. Life is distorted

between jealousy and admiration, and the plain teaching of common-sense is as little understood as the conditions of the fourth dimension or the poetic aspirations of the Simian tongue. The adored is not a real person; the happiness anticipated is not practical nor practicable. Both are on all-fours with the substantiality of a cloud and the serviceable roadway of a rainbow. Custom, familiarity, daily habits are the sole tests by which the reality of the thing beloved can be tried—the reality of the thing beloved and consequent validity of love. Before these tests are applied, the whole affair is as a fairy dream born of the perfume and the mystery of night. With the clear cold breath of morning the dream vanishes, but—what is left? The sigh of the vanishing god?—a tear on the cheek of Psyche?—the loathing of the man who finds Mélusine a serpent rather than a woman?—or the peaceful joy of the child who dreams of angels and wakes in its mother's arms?—of those who sleeping on the ocean wake to find themselves safe in port?

* * * *

"Rita" thinks Love is beautiful and wise.

At one period of life, love is simply an emotion—the outcome of attraction, or the effect of that vague mystery which surrounds sex. In this emotional stage the *feeling* may be real enough, but the passion is an illusion. A girl is often more in love with Love than with an actual lover. The youth who beholds his ideal in the First Woman is in love with the woman herself who for the time (usually very brief) embodies that ideal. But to the girl and the youth comes an hour when they are humiliatingly conscious of study wasted on a prettily-bound work of fiction that for all use and purpose in life is quite valueless. The edifice of romance is constructed much on the same plan as a child's castle of cards, and deservedly shares the same fate. That is to say, the topmost card overbalances the whole structure. It is usually the hand of Reason that topples over Love's romantic tenement by crowning it with the card of Common Sense. When we find Love has become a practical reality, the discovery is often very unpleasant. We would rather not be unhappy if we had the choice. Unfortunately, we haven't, and find ourselves in that condition without exactly knowing how we drifted into it. Drifters often discover Love to be a very practical reality, because of unpleasant consequences. It is decidedly humiliating to find ourselves in the toils of a siren the very reverse of our high ideal of the personage who is to have the honour and glory of subjugating us,

This is one of Love's amusing little ways of proving that ideals are really not important. The best and safest test of the reality of Love is to ask yourself how much you have suffered on account of it. I don't speak of such trifles as tears, heart-aches, sleepless nights, fevers of jealousy and despair, sacrifices, or discomforts, but of *real* genuine self-torment and mental torture which only this passion is capable of inflicting on its victims. The most sceptical will acknowledge that its powers in this line are only excelled by its apparent animosity. To discover the life that completes and contents our own is not given to many of us poor mortals. Here and there some fortunate individuals have made that discovery—but they are rare—and not given to boasting on the subject; yet though worldly wise folk scoff at love as a myth, I question whether they could name any other passion of the heart which has occupied so important a place in the world's history, which has given life to all that is great and divine in art, or inspired such deeds of heroism, self-sacrifice, and martyrdom. Before its patient strength men have stood mute and wondering, and proud heads have bent in reverence, and stern eyes grown dim. For Love is beautiful, despite faults, and wise, despite follies. It alone of all human emotions can lift our souls heavenwards, and make even life's thorny path a thing of beauty.

* * * *

John Strange Winter's opinions.

Love may be classed under several heads. The first, the great, the unattainable, the one-sided, and the worn-out. They are all real! What can be more real than the perhaps not very practical passion which first makes young hearts ache? What agony it is to *her* when *he* dances three times running with that horrid, stuck-up London girl, with her fashionable jargon, her languorous movements, just a turn or two, and then stop for as many minutes! First love is not often last love. *He* thinks *her* unreasonable to mind those dances, yet when a great love comes into her life, making her think of him as "just a boy," he suffers all, or nearly all, the pangs of a great passion. Unavailing pain! *She* has cast the die of her life, and past loves are shadows compared with the absorbing power that now grips her heart like a vice. Much may happen to the great love, but it is very real! A great love may merge into matrimony, and life may run on oiled wheels, and Darby and Joan may pass through the world, loving faithfully, and without digression, to the end. Or something may come between, and the great love may become the unattainable! It will not be the less real for that.

The Unattainable.

The unattainable has more in it of pathos than despair. Romance sweetens it, and the romance never dies. The tenderness of "what might have been" gives balm to many a suffering soul! The wife may be unhappy, neglected, heartsick, she may even loathe him whose name she bears, but she is often upholden by the thought that *he* would have been wholly different! A husband may know that he has married the wrong woman, yet he bears what is, because he cannot have *her* who would have made life all sunshine. Few pity the one-sided love, helpless, hopeless, and without justification as it is; yet it is very real to the lonely soul. The worn-out love is the very essence of sadness! It is heart-breaking to watch the efforts of a foolish heart to keep a love dying or already dead, to see love, which would once have made a paradise, poured out at the feet of one who is only bored and not even touched by it. Nothing is so dead as a dead love—yet, even *that* is real!

* * * *

Miss May Crommelin takes a professional view

Can any sensible novelist hesitate? Does a shoemaker depreciate leather? Would you saw off the tree-branch you sit on? Now, on this subject, anybody's opinion (full-grown) is as good as another's. Let the footman bring down word that love is the drawing-room topic, and the cook will cry out, "What do they know more about it than *us?*" Is it not a human feeling, call it instinct or no? Surely old Sally Jones has simpler feelings than the Dowager Countess; as much experience in this. Love is just as real as a rainbow on a wet day; as—as influenza. The first may be a "pleysing payne": the latter must be a very displeasing one. But there is little fiction about either to the victims. Well, suppose love a mere brain-fantasm; an odd survival when sensible folk have swept away beliefs in witchcraft, fairies, and the virtue of fire and faggot for the wicked ones who don't say their prayers the same way we do. *Still, was it not worth while to have invented it?* However the idea was evoluted, just consider the glamour it throws over thorns and thistles, as we dig through life's long day of toil. As Trollope's stout widow says, when choosing her second: "It's a whiff of the rocks and the valleys." (So she had her marriage settlements tightly drawn up, to enjoy her romance comfortably.) Consider this epitaph—a real one—

"Poorly lived, and poorly died;
Poorly buried, *and nobody cried.*"

Broach this subject of love to a circle after dinner, round a good fire. Everybody laughs! The young men and maidens look conscious. What they feel is as real to them as pleasure in music they hear; in the taste of wine. Yes, and far more—while it lasts. Some elders profess scorn, because their minds are so choked with years' dust of daily cares they have forgotten how they, too, once believed love real—while it lasted! Ay! there's the rub. You are told—truthfully—that love is strong as death: inconstant as every breeze. Some declare, for them—

"In the whole wide world there was but one."

Other as honest souls confess their hearts have known, since first love, "many other lodgers." This seems clear, love is real to those who *give it!* Only they who care more to *get it*, call it moonshine and naughty names. Like figures on an Egyptian monument, each follows one who looks at another. Never one scorned, but has rejected a third.

"As Pan loved Echo, Echo loved the satyr,
The satyr Lyda—and so the three went weeping."

* * * *

Miss Quiller Couch wishes Love were a pleasing fiction.

"Pleasing fiction," forsooth; would that it were! It is a very real game, and the rules thereof are practical. I know it, for verily I myself have suffered. Let it not be understood, however, that it is *as* a "practical, real lover" that I have suffered. Not at all. It is that this order of beings walks abroad, and I am not of it, and I meet it, and I am pained, and I feel sorry. Could Love be but a pleasing fiction, how comfortable to sit aside and contemplate it—a trifle to talk of, a dainty to dally with, a joy to the juvenescent, a blessing to the book-writer, yet never an inconvenience. But it is a practical reality, and it has great effects. Why, I have seen good, healthy people, quite nice-tempered people, brought to a shadow by it and churned into so many pounds of incompetent irritability; *so* exacting about trifles, so fidgetty about catching the mail, and so careless of the health of the uninteresting majority. There was one man I knew down in a village, and he fell in love with a pretty girl—they mostly do that—but she would have nothing to say to him; and after every rejected proposal he went straight home and made a three-legged stool (he was a carpenter by trade, or perhaps it might have affected him differently). He was what one might call an importunate man, for he proposed nineteen times in all, and nineteen three-legged stools stood as silent witnesses of his importunity. He changed houses after

the twelfth, for he found a sad joy in contemplating his handiwork as he sat at his lonely meals, and his first sitting-room was only twelve feet by eight. Finally, either because of his importunity, or because she disliked the thought that the wordless witnesses might fall into unsympathetic hands, the girl married the man, and scrubbed the stools nicely with soap and sand, and grew quite fond of them. And only once did she regret her surrender; and that was when it flashed across her one day that twenty would have been a prettier number: but she stifled that pain as years went on, and grew happy. Then there was Dante's love for Beatrice, which caused him to sit down and write such a lot. Most remarkable persons seem to have produced something rather excellent as the outcome of their love. I know a naturally lazy and slightly dingy boy who endured a nice clean collar every day, and it cut his neck, and his soul abhorred it, for he told me so; and he spent from seventy-five to ninety minutes over his toilet every morning, while he loved, and he knew he could dress in four minutes and a quarter, for he had done it often. Love was a great beautifier. In this case I must admit that the lover suffered more than we outsiders, except that he became irritable in his cleanliness. Love should not be scorned, even if it is real and sometimes uncomfortably practical. It is very beautiful, and lovers make a pretty sight. What I protest is, that *all* creatures should be lovers—or *none*. It is the half-and-half state of the world which is irksome.

* * * *

Morley Roberts hopes Love will some day be a pleasing reality

Ah, my gentle cocksure friends, how well you all know Love, and how ready you are to say what it is, to cut it up, to carve it, to classify it, and generally to spread it out. We live in a world of lies, and conventions, the dead leavings of an ignorant past, bind us still. Some day, perhaps, when men and women are free, Love will be a pleasing reality. It can never be so in the majority of cases so long as we play at make-believe, and teach nothing that we have learned. The good man won't teach his sons; he leaves them to learn in the gutter. The good woman keeps her daughters ignorant. As it stands it is an evil to love anyone over-much. And when we love we love over-much, for Love has been repressed till it has got savage in the race. "La privation radicale d'une chose crée léxcés." All the trouble comes from this—that we men have partially created women. But Nature had something to do with

her compounding. That is, perhaps, a pity from the social point of view. For Nature can't be nice and comfortable. She is only kind when we go her way. Let us remember that Love is the foundation of the world. The very protoplasmic cells from which we sprang could love. The time will come, perhaps, when, having chipped away the lies and faced the truth, we shall find reality a thousand times more pleasing than any fiction. Love is something real and wonderful, and in a natural world we shall have passed through the blood-splashed gates of Passion and be calm. Now, Love is tortured, for we love ignorantly. We are like shipwrecked folk on some strange land—we know not the fruits of the trees of it. We learn the poisons by experiment, and we let others learn. This is Love the Fiction. But some day when we awake we shall know what we now dream, and Love will be always the most precious flower that grows in the garden of the soul. It has the subtle fragrance of the heaven that is our own if we walk bravely in the world, desiring truth. Under its influence we discover ourselves. We build ships for new voyages, and burst into unknown waters with our Viking shields of victory ablaze in the morning sun. The air is sharp and keen, not fœtid with poisonous lies; the waters are blue and beautiful; there are shining shores about us, and marvels of a new nature on every hand. We who were in the night, and of it, become vivid with the sun. Our atheism banishes the worshipped gods of evil that are no more extant in our dogmatic creed of joy. For Truth and Beauty have guided us hand in hand, and all they ask of us is to throw away the Law of Lies and to acknowledge that the two are one.

* * * *

Zangwill reviews the evidence.

The traces left by Love in life are so numerous and diverse that I am almost tempted to the hypothesis that it really exists. There seems to be no other way of accounting for the facts. When you start learning a new language you always find yourself confronted with the verb "to love"—invariably the normal type of the first conjugation. In every language on earth the student may be heard declaring, with more zeal than discretion, that he and you and they and every other person, singular or plural, have loved, and do love, and will love. "To love" is the model verb; expressing the archetype of activity. Once you can love grammatically there is a world of things you may do without stumbling. For, strange to say, "to love," which in real life is associated with so

much that is bizarre and violent, is always "regular" in grammar, and this without barring accidence of any kind. For ancient and modern tongues tell the same tale—from Hebrew to street-Arabic, from Greek to the elephantine language that was "made in Germany." Not only is "to love" deficient in no language (as *home* is deficient in French, and *Geist* in English), but it is never even "defective." No mood or tense is ever wanting—a proof of how it has been conjugated in every mood and tense of life, in association with every variety of proper and improper noun, and every pronoun at all personal. Not merely have people loved unconditionally in every language, but there is none in which they would not have loved, or might not have loved, had circumstances permitted; none in which they have not been loved, or (for hope springs eternal in the human breast) have been about to be loved. Even woman has an Active Voice in the matter; indeed, "to love" is so perfect that, compared with it, "to marry" is quite irregular. For, while "to love" is sufficient for both sexes, directly you get to marriage you find in some languages that division has crept in, and that there is one word for the use of ladies and another for gentlemen only. Turning from the evidence enshrined in language to the records of history, the same truth meets us at any date we appoint. Everywhere "'Tis love that makes the world go round," though more especially in ball-rooms. It is awful to think what would have happened if Eve had not accepted Adam. What could have attracted her if it was not love? Surely not his money, nor his family. For these she couldn't have cared a fig-leaf. Unfortunately, the daughters of Eve have not always taken after their mother. The statistics of crime and insanity testify eloquently to the reality of love, arithmetic teaching the same lesson as history and grammar. Consider, too, the piles of love at Mudie's! A million story-tellers in all periods and at all places cannot have told all stories, though they have all, alas! told the same story. They must have had mole-hills for their mountains, if not straw for their bricks. There are those who, with Bacon, consider love a variety of insanity; but it is more often merely a form of misunderstanding. When the misunderstanding is mutual, it may even lead to marriage. As a rule Beauty begets man's love, Power woman's. At least, so women tell me. But then, I am not beautiful. It must be said for the man that every lover is a species of Platonist —he identifies the Beautiful with the Good and the True. The

woman's admiration has less of the ethical quality; she is dazzled, and too often feels, "If he be but true to me, what care I how false he be." The Romantic Love of the poets and novelists was of late birth; the savage and many civilisations knew it not, and philosophers explain that it could not be developed till Roman Law had developed the conception of Marriage as a Contract. Even to this day it is as rare as large paper editions of the books about it. Roughly speaking, I should say it would spring up here and there among all classes of the population, except poets and novelists. Romantic Love is the rose Evolution has grown on earthly soil. *Floreat!*

* * * *

Burgin thinks it all depends on the people who love.

One morning the average man gets up, lights his pipe, roams round his rooms in all the ease of unshaven countenance and dressing-gown-clad form. Then he goes out, and meets *her*. There may be a hundred women in the room, or park, or tennis ground, wherever the tragedy (Love is a tragedy) commences. When the lights are low he comes back, and is low also. Wonders how men can be such brutes as to want dinner; thinks his life has been misspent; that he is unworthy to touch her hand; that he has wallowed in the fleshpots, and here is a way out of them. And if the man's nature be noble and sweet and true; if he has hitherto drifted adown the stream of circumstance because his fellows have also drifted; then, with the deepening tides of his passion, the old spirit of knight-errantry descends upon him with its mystic mantle of white samite. And slowly out of this deepening torrent of bewildered impulse and devotion is born a new man—a man with a soul—a man who can dare all things, do all things, endure all things, for the sake of the woman he loves. At the baptism of her touch he becomes whole, and shapes his life to noble ends. Even if he can't marry her, he is the better for his passion. Such a love endures until the leaves of the Judgment Book unroll; for it laughs to scorn the pitiful fools who boast of infidelity, the "male hogs in armour," as Kingsley calls them, who look upon women as toys, the sport of an idle moment, rather than the spiritual force which leavens the world, and makes it an endurable and joyous dwelling-place.

* * * *

And on the woman loved.

Of course, I was speaking of good women. I once heard a story about a bad woman—a woman of the world, who was very much amused at being taken seriously by a boy who loved her. "Tell me all

about it," she would say to him. "Explain what you feel, why you love me, why you believe in me. Don't you see I'm courted and admired—a social force—that men flock round me everywhere I go?" "Oh, yes," said the boy, "I see all that. But you're an angel of goodness, and can't help men liking you. If I lost faith in you, I'd kill myself." "Ah," she rejoined, "that's what you all say. You would doubt me, and live on." Then, one afternoon, he had good cause to doubt, inasmuch as her engagement to another man was announced. That evening she received a note from him: "Good-bye. If I lived on, I might doubt; it's better to die and—believe!" They told her of the—the accident that night, and she wrote a touching little paragraph about it for the Society papers before dining out.

* * * *

Gribble generalleth confidently.

In a sense, of course, Love is necessarily a fiction, whether pleasing or otherwise; for illusion is of the essence of it. The lover, in fact, is like the artist who sees things through a temperament, and, by eliminating the irrelevant, builds up the ideal on the foundation of the real. Tityrus sees more in Amaryllis than his brother shepherds see, just as Mr. Whistler sees more in a November fog than is visible to the eye of the casual wayfarer who gets lost in it, and mingles profanity with his coughs, yet, granting this, the reality and completeness of the illusion does not admit of doubt. On no alternative hypothesis can the great majority of marriages be explained. If commonplace people saw each other as others see them, surely they would remain single all their lives. Yet most people are commonplace, and most people marry. The reality—the controlling over-mastering reality—of Love has to be assumed to make their behaviour intelligible.

* * * *

Having hasted from a wedding for the purpose.

This point struck me forcibly the last time I was present at a wedding. It was a Jewish wedding, celebrated at the little synagogue behind the Haymarket. I had no acquaintance with anyone concerned in the ceremony, but had dropped in quite casually, having heard that Jewish weddings were picturesque. The one thing that impressed me more than anything else was the decided undesirability of both the bridegroom and the bride. That the bride was not comely goes for little. But her forehead indicated a limited range and low ideals; the corners of her mouth spoke of an irritable temper; her bearing was vulgar; her voice had a

twang that made one long to take her by the shoulders and shake her violently. She was also escorted by gaudy female relatives, by looking at whom one could anticipate the awful possibilities of her maturity. As for the bridegroom, he was a Hebrew of the florid type. His waistcoat was protuberant; he had a red face with red whiskers sprawling all over it; he wore flash jewellery; his hair shone with pomatum; there was that in his bearing which indicated that he followed some sordid calling, such as pawnbroking, or the backing of horses on commission. Yet one could see that these two unattractive persons were really attracted by each other. A great and beautiful miracle had been performed; and the power which had performed it was that Love in which some profess to disbelieve.

* * * *

Frank Mathew displays his gnorance.

Ignorance—says some wiseacre—is the mother of eloquence, and I take it that the less one knows of Love the easier it is to write of it. I side with those who hold that the Love described by poets and other wordy people is mainly fanciful, a flattering picture, that the best school for such writing is an unhappy affection, and that no man can want better luck than to have his heart broken, and so be made proof against lovesickness. An unrequited love runs no risk of being dulled by the prose of life. A man so fortunate as to be jilted or rejected finds his Beloved remaining beautiful and young to him when her husband sees her an unwieldy and wearisome old woman. And when at times he grows sentimental—a bachelor's privilege—he can feel again the old hopes that he never found false, and see the old perfections that were never disproved. He has a life-companion who comes only when she is wanted, and then with a "smile on her face and a rose in her hair," whose voice is always gentle, to whom wrinkles are not necessary and bills are not known.

* * * *

And praises ugliness.

I am one of those who prefer the luckless adorers in novels to the conquering heroes; and hold that the quality an ideal lover needs most is ugliness, so that he may honour beauty the more. Once I knew a boy who was uglier than sin, and who wrote a story—in a sprawling hand and on ruled paper—a wonderful story, telling how an unlovely but admirable Knight, worshipping a Princess, rode out to win her by great deeds, and how when he came back triumphant, the sight of her brought his unworthiness

home to him so that he dared not claim her. And I knew another boy who was good-looking, and wrote a story (during study-time, of course, and by stealth) about a handsome hero who went to Court in fine clothes, and was worshipped by all the girls. I think now that he was the manlier, but that the first would have made the more devout lover. But the drawback of luckless adorers is that their constancy has not been tried by the ordeal of success. Many a fellow who lived loyal and heart-broken would have made an unfaithful husband.

* * * *

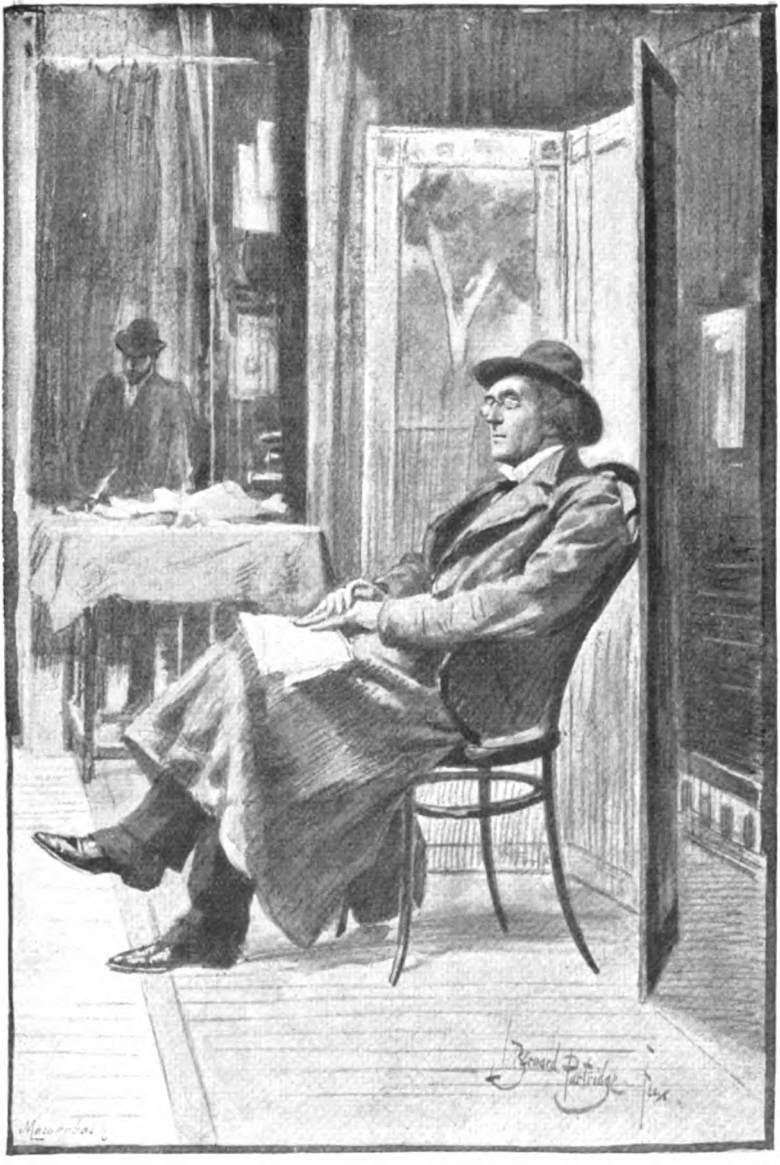
"Q." is surprised at his sister.

Love, no doubt, is a subject of popular interest, but a man is always staggered to find his sister holding an opinion upon it. If I remember rightly, in the days when Lilian Quiller Couch (then aged seven) did me the honour of playing Juliet to my Romeo, the interest was mainly acrobatic, Romeo descending the gardener's ladder head-foremost, while Juliet tilted her body as far over the nursery window-sill as she could manage without breaking her neck. We "cut" the love speeches. Two years later, indeed, my sister schemed to marry me to our common governess. There was no love on my side; so she turned over the Prayer-book, hoping to find "A man may not marry his governess" in the table of Forbidden Degrees. Such a prohibition (she well knew) would be a trumpet-call to my native spirit of disobedience. But I am convinced that even then the nature of true affection did not enter into her calculations. She merely counted on my marital influence to end or mend the French irregular verbs. I am delighted that, in these later days, she sees Love to be a "practical reality." For my part, I want a definition. Popular custom bestows the name of Love on a green sickness which is in fact a part of Nature's wise economy. I will expound. Almost all young men, say between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five, incline to consume much meat and do next to no work. Were there no corrective, it is clear that in a few years the face of the earth would be eaten bare as by locusts. But at this season Nature by the simplest stroke—the flush of a commonplace cheek, the warm touch of a commonplace hand—in a twinkling redresses the balance. Forthwith the ideal devourer of crops and herbs not only loses his appetite, but arising, smacks the earth with a hoe till the clods fly and the fields laugh with harvest. Thereon he mops his steaming brow, bedecks him with a bunch of white ribbons, and jogs jovially to church arm in arm with the pretty

cause of all this beneficent disturbance. And the spectacle is mighty taking and commendable; but you'll excuse me for holding that it is not Love. It bears about the same relation to Love that Bumble-puppy bears to good whist. Among the eccentricities that make up the Average Man I find none more diverting than his complacent belief that he is, or has been, or will certainly some day be, in love. As a matter of fact, the capacity to love belongs to one man or woman in ten thousand. Listen to Matthew Arnold:

> "But in the world I learnt, what there
> Thou wilt too surely one day prove,
> That will, that energy, though rare,
> Are yet far, far less rare than love."

I go further and believe it rarer even than Genius. Indeed, the capacity to love *is* a specialised form of genius. You understand that I am not commending it. Its possessors are often disreputable and almost always unhappy. Their recompense is that they, and they only, have seen the splendours of the passion, and vibrated to the shaking inner music of the sheep-boy's pipe.



MR. HENRY IRVING WATCHING A REHEARSAL

THE IDLER.

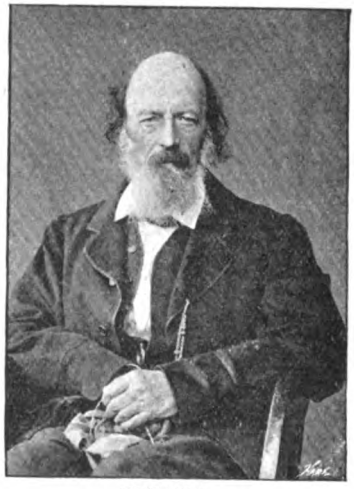
The Lyceum Rehearsals.

By G. B. Burgin.

Illustrations by J. Bernard Partridge.

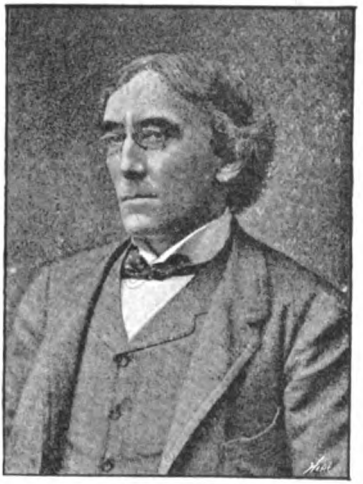
(Photographs by Messrs. Barraud.)

ONE day a paragraph appears in the papers that a new piece will shortly be produced at such and such a theatre. Paterfamilias lays down the paper and placidly observes that it may be worth while getting seats. Then he goes down to the theatre, books seats, and troubles himself no more about the matter until the first night of the play in question. The world behind the curtain is one with which he is totally unfamiliar. He knows naught of its struggles, its hopes and fears, its arduous work, its magnificent prizes and sore disappointments. So many thousands of pounds have been spent in preparing the play, so many reputations are at stake, so many hearts will be gay and glad to-morrow, or aching with the bitter pain of defeat. But to Paterfamilias these are all the joys or sorrows of another world. As he watches the smooth, easy performance, in which every actor has his place, in which the whole pageant produces itself without apparent effort, he fails to imagine the ceaseless work involved in its adequate realisation. He does not know that for weeks before the production of a new play, say at the Lyceum for instance, Mr. Irving and the wonderful company which he has gathered



TENNYSON.

round him labour over it often far into the night after the audience has left. The general idea of an actor's life is that it is a delightful round of social pleasures tempered by a few hours' light, agreeable work in the evening; to those who think this, a visit to the Lyceum rehearsals would reveal the other side of the shield. Very few men in London labour so indefatigably as Mr. Irving. To watch him directing a rehearsal almost makes one's head ache at the mere idea of such unceasing labour. Every motion, however insignificant, of each individual on the stage, from himself down to the newest and rawest "super," has to be thought out and planned in Mr. Irving's brain. Like an ideal general, he leaves nothing to chance, nothing to subordinates. The turning up or down of every gas jet, the movement of every piece of furniture, the effect of every note of music, has received his most careful thought. One watches him stand hour after hour on the Lyceum stage, without weariness, without impatience, guiding the whole of the great production. And though Mr. Irving never spares himself, he is very considerate to others. When, for instance, a young actor is unable to comprehend the full meaning of an explanation, Mr. Irving walks up and down the stage, one arm on his shoulder, and explains the whole conception of the part. He is not only a great actor, but a great teacher; and his influence pervades and dominates every being in the theatre. He does not merely assert, but gives full and sufficient reason for every action until every one on the stage grasps the exact



MR. HENRY IRVING.

MISS TERRY STUDYING HER PART.

meaning of the scene as well as he does himself. As an instance of this, let us follow the rehearsals of "Becket."

The theatre itself is deserted save by some ghostly caretaker who glides noiselessly through the shadowy gloom, sliding a brush over the upholstery without looking at it, and replacing each covering as she goes. On the stage are two gentlemen wearing picturesque soft hats, and long coats which reach to within half-a-foot of the ground. The taller of the two, Mr. Henry Irving, wears a light drab-coloured coat and dark hat; Mr. William Terriss is attired in a light hat and dark coat. In the centre of the stage, close to the foot-lights, stands a screen; behind the screen is a chair. To the left of the stage (as you look at it from the stalls) is placed a small table with a big gilt cross on it. On the extreme right there is another small table laden with papers, plans of the stage, and letters. At the back of the stage are grouped numerous male "supers," clad in ordinary morning costume and wearing the inevitable "bowler" hat, which does not harmonise very well with the huge spears they carry. It is the scene in the second act of the late Poet Laureate's "Becket," "The Meeting of the Kings," and Mr. Irving is busily engaged grouping some fifty people who are required to pose as barons, French prelates, and retainers. When he has done this, there is still something wanted to complete the picture. Two pages are lacking. "Where's Johnny?" asks Mr. Irving, and "Johnny" appears. Mr. Irving eyes him critically. "I'm afraid you're too big, Johnny," he says, and "Johnny" disappointedly makes way for a smaller boy.

MR. WILLIAM TERRISS.

Mr. Irving stands well in the centre of the stage, absorbing every detail. The French bishops are huddled too near together, and he groups them more naturally. *Becket's* mortal foes,

Fitzurse, *De Brito*, *De Tracy*, and *De Morville*, are moved lower down towards the audience, so that they can go "off" with greater effect when jeering at *Becket*.

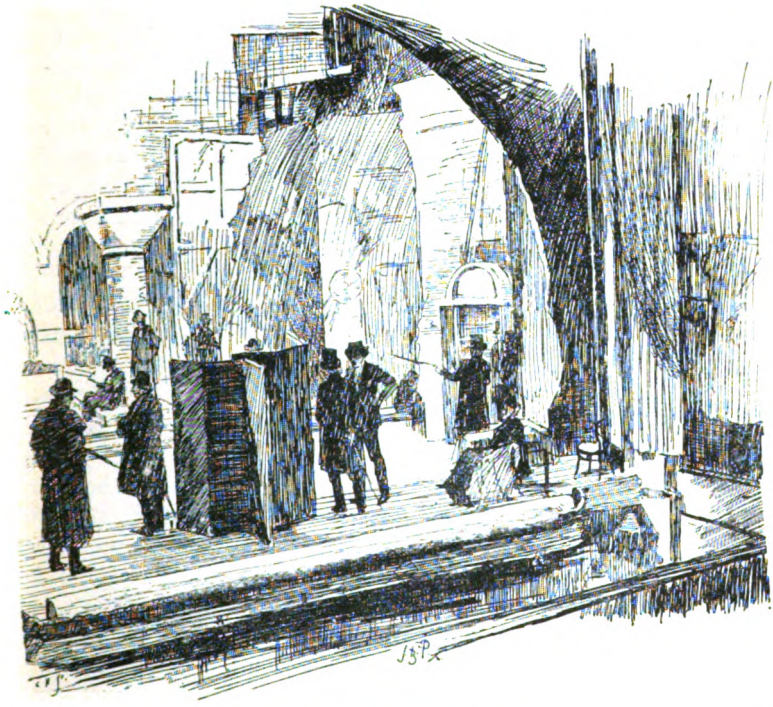
The cameo-cut outlines of Mr. Irving's fine serious features are plainly visible as he turns to look at the wings. "I don't see any necessity for having these 'wings' so forward," he declares, and the wings at once slide gently back, moved by some invisible agency. In response to Mr. Irving's request for another alteration in the scenery (he speaks with an utter absence of effort in a voice which can be heard at the other end of the theatre, although it does not appear to be raised above a conversational pitch), a middle-aged gentleman, attired in a frock coat, his brows carefully swathed in a white pocket handkerchief, comes forward, yardstick in hand, and measures the stage with great assiduity. When this has been done, Mr. Irving sits down with "Please go on." Then he turns to Mr. Terriss: "Shall we go through it first without the dialogue?" "Yes," answers Mr. Terriss; and the whole action of the scene is gone through, Mr. Irving and Mr. Terriss exchanging their direction of the various groups for the assumption of their own parts with an ease and rapidity born of long practice, Mr. Irving moving about from group to group until he is satisfied with the effect of the whole. Mr. H. T. Loveday, the stage manager, being at present ill, Mr. Terriss is kindly assisting Mr. Irving with rehearsal. After the entrances and exits have been arranged for the twentieth time, *Henry's* magnificent voice rings out as *Louis* enters:

"'Brother of France, what shall be done with *Becket*?'"

As this is one of the early rehearsals, the actors are not yet word perfect. Each holds his part in one hand, and refreshes his memory as he goes on. When *Henry* and *Louis* have finished their dialogue, and *Becket* is about to enter, Mr. Irving suddenly pauses. "Make a note that before *Becket's* entrance there should be a slow chant—a Gregorian chant—and flourishes. Where are the gentlemen who sing?" "The gentlemen who sing" come

on, and practise the chant. "Not quite so loud." Mr. Irving claps his hands (the stage signal for stopping people) and decides to try the effect behind the scenes. "That will do; very good," he declares, as the solemn chant steals slowly in, and then, merging the manager in the actor, kneels at *Henry's* feet.

At this juncture, Mr. Irving becomes the stage-manager again,



THE STAGE FROM THE DRESS CIRCLE.

and turns to the group of *Henry's* followers. "You, gentlemen, are to come up here. You are rather startled, and listen attentively; that's the spirit of it." *King Henry's* followers move up, and jeer at *Becket*, who curses them. Then come the voices of the crowd without:

"'Blessed be the Lord Archbishop, who hath withstood two kings to their faces for the honour of God.'"

But Mr. Irving is not satisfied with the crowd. "Slower and more gravely, please. I want the emphasis on 'the Lord Archbishop.' So! That will be very good."

After this, there is an interval, and Mr. Irving and Mr. Terriss disappear. Before they return, the stage carpenters begin to prepare for the murder scene in the last act. A number of what appear to be canvas-covered trunks are brought in and laid down to represent stones in the choir of Canterbury Cathedral.

Meantime, some of the gentlemen who represent the monks in this scene playfully spar at one another, or lunge with walking-sticks at imaginary foes. The carpenters are busy measuring the stage in all directions with tapes in accordance with a plan which one of them holds in his hand. Before Mr. Irving returns, the "supers" group themselves "left" and answer to their names. When he reappears, they look at him expectantly. "I am not going to rehearse this scene to-day," he says, "but will just arrange it. Those who sing, go over right (left from the audience). You sing the vespers. I want six more with you. Then, twelve of the shortest. You follow them. All the short ones you have, please. Yes, you're short (to a diminutive 'super' who is standing on tiptoe and trying to look seven feet high at least). Don't be bashful. You're none the worse for being short. Come along"; and with unfailing memory Mr. Irving calls each man by name, and indicates his place. When a man fails to quite realise what is required of him, Mr. Irving takes him by the shoulders, and gently moves him along to the required position, very much as if the individual in question were a pawn about to be played in a game of chess. As soon as the monks are grouped to his satisfaction, he steps back. "That's it. Now, you all come down from the choir. There is a loud hammering against tne door. I go to open the door, and all of you rush right by me." Then Mr. Irving opens the door to his murderers, and is borne back by the crowd of terrified monks. Five minutes afterwards, he has returned to life, and is rehearsing a scene from "King Lear," with Miss Ellen Terry's understudy, in as natural and unembarrassed a manner as if he had not been working hard for three hours previously.

Especial care is bestowed by Mr. Irving with regard to every detail of the murder scene. On another occasion, the scenery is not ready, but a flight of steep steps, essential to the action, is placed far back in a position to left of the stage. As "Becket" has never been played before, there are no traditions whatever to guide actors or scenic artists, and each movement, phrase, gesture, and intonation, must be "created." Mr. Irving picks up a huge battle-axe and hatchet, and carefully plans the details of his own

murder. Having decided how to die, he thoughtfully surveys the steps up which the frightened monks are supposed to rush. "They won't do," says Mr. Irving. "They are too steep; there is no hand-rail; and the monks will fall over and hurt themselves. Take off four steps. It would be too dangerous if anyone fell

A CRITICAL MOMENT.

down. Now, then, *Salisbury* and *Grim*, I enter, forced along by you. Catch hold of me, and put your arms round me this way. That's it. No; I don't like those steps."

Mr. Irving again tries the steps personally, and decides what further alterations are required. Then he addresses the monks,

who stand by the steps awaiting instructions. "This is a scene, gentlemen, which requires the utmost carefulness and patience, and all the earnestness you can throw into it. Now, gentlemen."

The crowd: "Here is the great Archbishop. He lives! he lives!"

"No, I wouldn't do it that way," says Mr. Irving. "'Here is the great Archbishop.' You're surprised to see me, you know. Then pause. 'He lives! he lives!' in a sort of whisper. Now, go back and chant the service, and do it all over again."

MISS GENEVIEVE WARD AND MASTER BYRNE REHEARSING.

The solemn strains of the organ are heard, as *Rosamond* goes off, the cue for the monks to enter being, "And pass at once perfect to Paradise." But the organ is too loud; so is the chant. After several attempts, the organ sounds more softly, the monks appear, and *Becket* enters, hurried along by his friends. But the monks have not yet caught the spirit of the scene. "You are frightened out of your lives. See," says Mr. Irving, and, in a second, he personates a frightened monk. The next moment, with bewildering rapidity, he is the Archbishop again. "'What do these people fear?' When I say, 'I will go out and meet them,' you must murmur as if to stop me. I tell you, 'Why, these are our own monks who follow'd us,' and you are reassured. Then I open the door, with, 'Come in, my friends, come in.' Yes, that's it. Who leads the monks as they come in? Mr. Belmore? Yes, that's right. You rush in, followed by monks, crying out as if you were thoroughly frightened:

"'A score of knights all arm'd with swords and axes.'

Then pause a moment, and shout, 'To the choir, to the choir.' Some of you run half-way up the steps, then come down again

as if you had changed your minds, and rush right across the other side. You are confused, and don't know what to do. You, Mr. Bishop, shout out in your tremendous voice, 'To the crypt.'"

This movement is rehearsed some twenty times before it satisfies Mr. Irving. At last, the monks disappear, and *Becket* is left to confront his murderers. "I stand here in the transept, and *Fitzurse* rushes up to me. What's he say? Oh, 'I will not only touch but drag thee hence.' Then I say, 'Thou art my man, thou art my vassal. Away,' and push him off."

Fitzurse falls, and Mr. Irving stops reading from the part. "No, *Fitzurse*, you take hold of me, and I fling you off violently. You must remember that I am supposed to be a strong man—a man who has been a soldier. Like this," and Mr. Irving falls on the stage with an ease born of long practice. "You pick yourself up, rush at me with drawn sword (it's all one movement), and shout, 'I told thee that I should remember thee.' I say, 'Profligate, pander.' You come on with, 'Do you hear that? Strike! strike!' I cover my face. 'I do commend my cause to God,' and you rush off, drunk with blood, half-horrified at what you've done, and yet braving it out, crying, 'King's men! King's men!' to support your Dutch courage."

MISS GENEVIEVE WARD. ("ELEANOR")

The murderers go "off," and Mr. Terriss and Mr. Irving practise a series of different attitudes for the death scene until Mr. Irving is finally satisfied. He has taken off his coat in order to better rehearse the murder scene. Mr. Terriss now helps him on with it again, the monks are recalled, and some dozen more painstaking attempts made to get everything right. "It's very simple, gentlemen," Mr. Irving assures the monks. "Very simple, when you've once caught the spirit of it." This rehearsal has lasted for nearly three hours, during the whole of which time Mr. Irving has superintended everything, thrown himself into each man's part, grouped everyone, created the action, devised suggestions for scenery, as if regardless of the fact that in the evening

he will have to undergo the awful stress and strain of *King Lear*. Any other man, with a less intense vitality, would simply collapse under all this pressure. Mr. Irving puts up his eyeglass, takes a last look at the stage, and walks buoyantly off as if the whole thing were mere child's play.

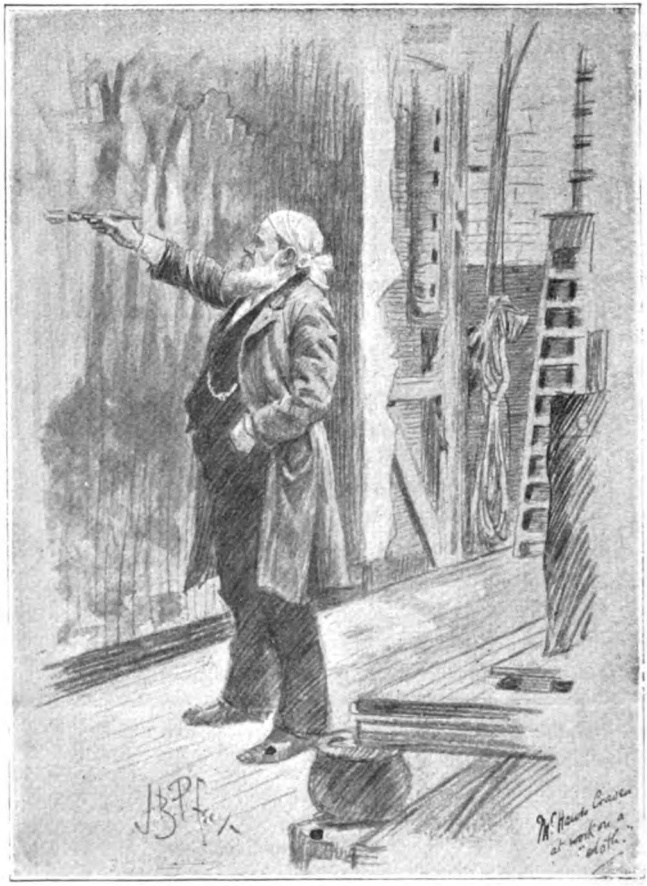
But where is Miss Ellen Terry? The question answers itself as soon as asked, for a gliding, graceful feminine presence appears on the stage. Miss Ellen Terry is attired in black, with a white fichu at her breast to relieve the monotony of this sombre garb. In her hand she carries a little black basket, and there is a glimmer of steel at her side as if she wore a reticule containing the hundred-and-one trifles which ladies like to carry about with them. So much has been written and said about Miss Terry that it would seem at first sight utterly impossible to say anything new. In five minutes, the difficulty is to say enough. The supreme unconsciousness of Art, or Nature, enables her to assume a hundred changing attitudes; her voice is heard without effort from one end of the theatre to the other; she possesses the most exquisite tact. Watch the skill, for instance, with which she induces some young actor to realise the true meaning of a passage in the play. She seems to be thinking it out to herself as if a new idea had been presented to her. "Yes," she says, musingly, "I wonder if that is what Tennyson meant?" Or, "Wait a minute," she adds brightly. "How would this do?" Then she repeats the passage with the right emphasis, action, and intonation, giving the meaning clearly and fully. "Don't you think that must be what is meant?" she asks questioningly. "Hum-m," says the actor, looking at the lines. "Ah, very likely. Perhaps it is." It is agreed that it shall be spoken that way, and the actor gives a delicate and truthful reading of the part, which will procure him a pat on the back from the critics when the play is produced. In the presence of her intuitive perception, the members of the caste instinctively become energetic and animated. At one moment she bends over to Mr. Meredith Ball in the orchestra, her long black skirt sweeping the stage in gracefu folds; at another "moves up" to test a portion of the scenery and confer with Mr. Irving, or, with chair lightly dragging after, walks towards the wings, sits down, and rapidly cons her part. Three minutes after, she has crossed the stage, and is writing a letter. Before the letter is finished, something else claims her attention. Then she comes back, finishes it, and is consulted by Mr. Irving and Mr. Terriss as to how he (Mr. Terriss) is to jump over a table without forfeiting his kingly dignity. Mr. Terriss has

already vaulted over the table some eight times with the agility of a deer, but Mr. Irving wants it done differently. "I think you'd better," he says, "have something on the table, and pick it up before you go over. If you do it this way, it looks rather like Lillie Bridge, you know." Miss Ellen Terry reflects a moment, then asks, in mirthful tones, suiting the action to the word, "What is that jump that makes you go sideways as you fly over hurdles?" Mr. Terriss, like Mr. Winkle's horse, goes "sideways." This method, however, still lacks dignity, and at last it is decided that he shall place both hands on the table, spring over, and so lightly up the steps and exit. Half-way up the steps he is recalled by Mr. Irving's warning voice, "Don't go up there; it isn't safe yet."

MISS ELLEN TERRY.

There is one gentleman who plays a very important part in the proceedings, yet never appears on the Lyceum stage in public, and that is Mr. Hawes Craven, the scenic artist. Frequenters of the theatre have for many years past been familiar with Mr. Craven's beautiful scenery, but very few of them know the manner of place where it is produced. Down many deep steps beneath the stage is a winding passage leading past the unornamental bases of what appear to be huge balks of timber, rising up into space. These timbers are interspersed with rubber pipes for lighting purposes. Leaning against the wall is a dilapidated structure, very much like a huge Robinson Crusoe umbrella out of repair, which, on closer inspection, proves to be the hovel used in "King Lear." Close to it is affixed a placard giving directions how to manipulate the celebrated Lyceum thunder. A little beyond is a narrow flight of stone steps leading to Mr. Craven's painting room, which is fifty feet long and about thirty feet wide. It is lit by a skylight extending the full width of the roof. On each side of it are stretched huge canvasses, eighteen feet high and forty-seven feet long. These canvasses are extended on frames, which can be raised or lowered by means of a winch to suit Mr. Craven's convenience. Some idea of the expensiveness

of the materials for stage scenery may be gathered from the fact that the canvas alone costs a shilling a yard, with an additional charge of one penny for sewing. It takes Mr. Craven and his two assistants four hours to "prime" one cloth ready for painting. In times of emergency, he often works fourteen hours at a stretch.



MR. HAWES CRAVEN AT WORK ON A "CLOTH."

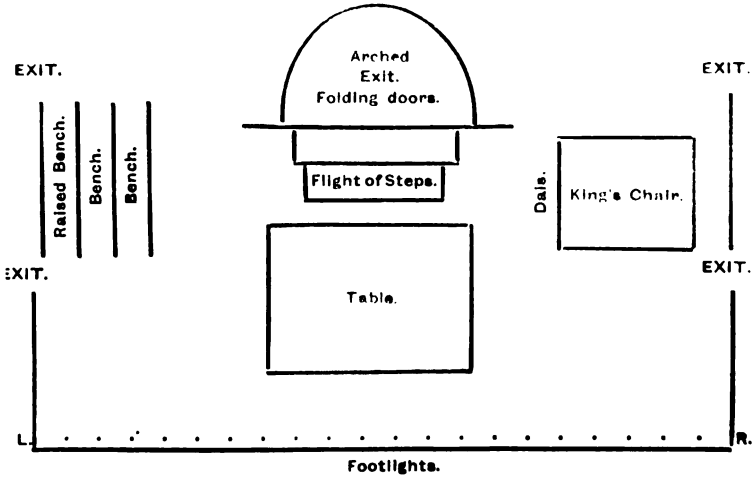
The floor of the room is bespattered thickly with paint; Mr. Craven's clothes are all the hues of the rainbow; so are those of his assistants, one of them unconsciously having decorated himself with a blue nose. The centre of the room is occupied by huge tables, on which stand earthen pots containing paint by the half-gallon, and brushes of all shapes and sizes. Indeed, some of the

brushes will hold two pounds weight of paint at a single dip, and Mr. Craven's implement for sketching in outlines is a thick stick of charcoal fastened on a long pole. The artist's method of painting is to walk to the centre tables, take a huge dip of paint, and speed back again to his canvas, which represents a huge ash tree. Mr. Craven, besides sporting as much woad on his person as an ancient Briton, wears a white handkerchief round his brows. When he is very much pressed for time, he exchanges this handkerchief for a red one, and the joke goes round that this means blood. As it is impossible to carry heavy pots of paint about all day, Mr. Craven really performs a kind of "sentry-go," painting as he goes. One curious fact is that his colours dry very quickly about two shades lighter than when they are wet. After Mr. Craven has covered a certain amount of space, he motions to the boy at the winch, and the whole vast canvas moves slowly up some two or three feet. Mr. Craven, in addition to his artistic knowledge, is a perfect ambulatory encyclopædia, his work requiring an intimate acquaintance with architecture, botany, history. He is, above all things, an artist, with an intimate knowledge of the shapes, the hues, the seasons of flowers, the colours and habits of birds, the tints of leaves, their varied forms, and the other thousand and one things which he is called upon to depict at a moment's notice. The rapidity with which he works is simply marvellous. "So sorry I can't talk much," he says;

MISS TERRY AND MR. TERRISS RUN THROUGH THEIR SCENE.

"but I had fourteen hours of it yesterday, and my feet are beginning to give out." "You ought to join the eight hours' movement, Mr. Craven." Mr. Craven makes a semi-circular sweep with a huge brush, the point of which lights on a pendulous ash bough. "Eight hours!" he echoes with genial scorn. "Why, if I did, my profession would (dab! dab! dab!) cease (dab! dab! dab!) to (dab!) exist for me"; and the naked bough is clad in graceful foilage with magical rapidity.

One evening, it is announced that for a couple of days Mr. Irving will not play. Before he has fully recovered, however, he comes down to rehearsal with Mr. Loveday, who is, happily, convalescent. Miss Terry and Mr. Terriss spare him all they can, the latter's Jove-like voice thundering over the stage when Mr. Irving wishes to convey commands to distant groups. But it is evident that Mr. Irving will not be restrained. After the rehearsal begins, the force of habit causes him to be here, there, and everywhere with unabated energy, as the grouping in the third scene of the first act is very difficult. The following rough diagram will give some idea of the stage:



This scene is laid in Northampton Castle. Some fifty people are on the stage, bishops, Templars, knights, and John of Oxford, President of the Council. Mr. Irving runs his eye over the different groups. "Put one man on the steps. Now, a group by the throne. The barons sit round the table, and the rest of you occupy the benches."

As the groups arrange themselves in obedience to Mr. Irving's directions, his somewhat elderly fox-terrier moves slowly "on," and superciliously surveys the general effect. As the barons give vent to angry murmurs, the dog howls. Sometimes, when Mr. Irving walks up the steps after bidding defiance to the barons, the dog follows stiffly after him to lend the weight of his moral support. Satisfied that all is well, the dog returns to Miss Terry, and goes to sleep on her dress. Now and then he wakes up, stretches himself, and evinces the most profound contempt for John of Oxford's speech by yawning in the orator's face. Seeing, at last, that the rehearsal will be longer than usual, he resigns himself to the inevitable, and goes to sleep again.

THE FIGHT AT NORTHAMPTON.

After Mr. Irving has grouped the men on the benches, he steps back and looks at the table. "We ought to have on it some kind of mace or crosier," he says—"a large crosier. Now for the 'make up.' All the barons and everyone who has a moustache must wear a small beard. All the gentlemen who have no beards remain unshaven. All the priests and bishops are unshaven. The mob can have slight beards, but this is unimportant. Now, take off your hats, gentlemen, please. Some of you must be old, some young. Hair very short;" and he passes from group to group selecting the different people.

"Now, I think, that is all understood pretty well. Where are the sketches for dresses?"

The sketches are brought, and he goes carefully through them. Miss Terry and Mr. Terriss also look over the big white sheets of paper. The fox-terrier strolls up to the group, gives a glance at them, and walks back again to Miss Terry's chair with a slightly cynical look. Then Mr. Irving returns to the groups by the benches. "Remember, gentlemen, you must be arguing here, laying down the law in this way," suiting the action to the word. "Just arrange who is to argue. Don't do it promiscuously, but three or four of you together. Try to put a little action into it. I want you to show your arms, and not to keep them glued to your sides like trussed fowls. No; that isn't half enough action. Don't be frightened. Better make too much noise rather than too little, but don't stop too suddenly. Start arguing when I ring the first bell. As I ring the second bell, you see me enter, and stop." The dog stands one bell, but the second annoys him, and he disappears from the stage altogether, until the people on the benches have finished their discussion.

Mr. Irving next tries the three-cornered stools which are placed around the table, but prefers square ones. The dog returns, walks over to the orchestra, looks vainly for a rat, and retreats under the table in the centre of the stage as if things were getting really too much for him. But his resting place is ill-chosen, for presently half-a-dozen angry lords jump on the table, and he is driven forth once more. After a stormy scene with the lords, Mr. Irving walks up the steps again. "When I say 'I depart,' you must let me get up the steps. All this time your pent-up anger is waiting to burst out suddenly. Don't go to sleep over it." He looks at the table in the centre of the stage, and turns to a carpenter. "This table will never do. It has to be jumped on by so many people that it must be very strong. They follow me. (To Miss Terry) They'd better catch hold of me, up the steps here."

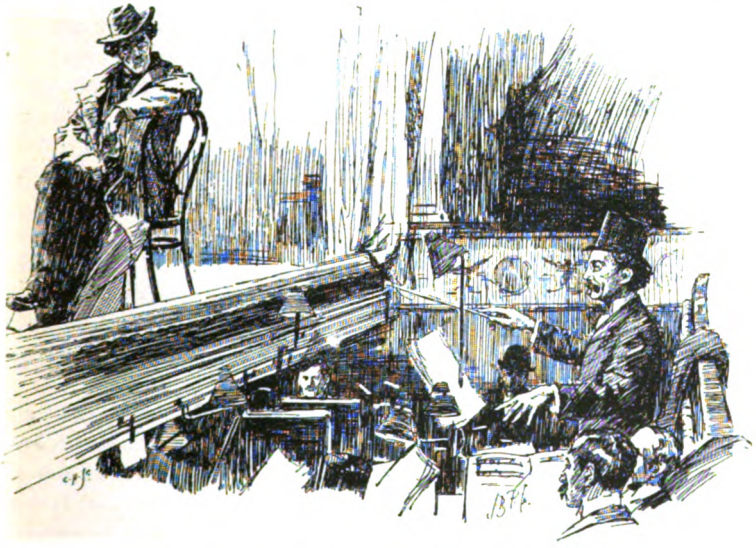
Miss Terry: They must do something. They can't stand holding you like that.

Mr. Irving: No. The door opens suddenly at top of steps, and discovers the crowd, who shout, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

The doors open and the crowd shout, but the effect is not good.

Miss Terry: It would be better if it were done at the foot of the steps. The people needn't show their faces as they do it, and the effect will be so much better.

The effect is tried, and found to answer admirably. Then the carpenters carry away the scenery, and the stage is "set" roughly for the Bower scene in the second act. Mr. Terriss fetches a screen from the left, and places it behind Miss Terry's chair; Mr. Irving sits facing Miss Terry, backed by another screen to keep off draughts; Mr. Terriss sits a little way back, and the dog goes to sleep in the centre of the group. In the background appear three or four costumed specimen monks and retainers waiting to be inspected, one frivolous being trying to balance a yard measure on the tip of his nose in a manner which ill accords with his monkish vestments. The "music cues" are



MR. IRVING CONSIDERING THE INCIDENTAL MUSIC.

very difficult to get right. Nearly an hour is consumed in trying different effects. Miss Terry insists that the whole scene entirely depends upon the action, and that the music must be subordinated to it. When the music drowns her voice, she suddenly stops with a despairing gesture, "We couldn't speak through this any more than the dead. Can't it begin loudly, Mr. Ball, then die away?" Then she turns to Miss Kate Phillips, who is her maid in the play. "Please try your song at the back there, Miss Phillips."

Miss Phillips sings a very pretty but sad little song, and Miss Terry listens attentively.

"It's an Irish wail," says Mr. Irving. "You don't want an Irish wail here, but a merry song. You should have a mirthful, running accompaniment," and the song is changed. "That is enough for to-day."

The dog thinks so too. The "Irish wail" has been the last straw. He precedes everyone towards the wings with joyous barks which quite belie his air of longsuffering cynicism. It is lunch time.

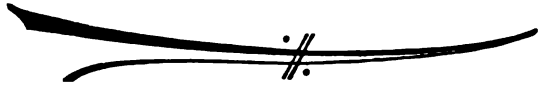
At the first full-dress rehearsal, the Lyceum stage resembles a bee-hive with its swarms of busy occupants. Huge pieces of scenery move about, propelled by perspiring carpenters in shirt-sleeves; whole skies suddenly float up into "the flies"; the prompter converses amicably with a mail-clad baron; then, more scenery glides majestically down from the roof or springs up suddenly through the stage, which is literally full of "traps" for the unwary. The "tum-tum-tum" of the fiddles in the orchestra sounds weirdly as the composer of the incidental music, Professor Stanford Villiers, leans over from the stalls and chats with Mr. Meredith Ball, or makes a mysterious statement to him that "the *staccato* should be a little more *staccato*." Presently, Professor Villiers remarks to the orchestra, "Instead of playing two short quavers, please play the crotchet in three time." The orchestra respond vigorously, but are stopped with a further request to "play the first chord in the second bar as a dotted minim instead of a quaver," and the Professor wanders about all over the house testing the effect of every note.

The prologue goes off as smoothly as if it had been played for a hundred nights. Miss Terry, clad in *Rosamond's* magnificent robes, sits in the stalls and watches the effect of the lights upon each group. Sometimes a light is too blue, or too yellow, or too white, and in the first act the rehearsal is stopped several times on this account. When Miss Terry is on the stage, Mr. Irving watches the lights; when Mr. Irving is acting, she studies each flash.

On the whole, there are wonderfully few details which require modification. In the Bower scene, the light is at first too yellow, and has to be altered. Practical experience proves that the bank up which the lovers go is too slippery. A portion of it is cut away, thus avoiding the probability of an awkward accident. Miss Ward trips on the hem of her regal robe, and requests the *costumier* to "take it up a little." Mr. Irving, with unfailing memory, notices that some spearmen are without their spears. But there is little to alter; at the second full-dress rehearsal there will be less; and on the evening of the first performance every-

thing and everybody will have settled down into the right place. Mr. Hawes Craven comes on once or twice to look at his handiwork, and see that it has been properly "set." Then he walks away with a brisk step to his well-earned rest.

Apart from the interest of the Bower scene, it is delightful to watch Miss Terry and Master Byrne, who plays *Geoffrey*. When he comes "on" a little before he is wanted, Miss Terry throws her arms round him and kisses the pretty little fellow tenderly with, "There, run away for a moment, darling; we're not quite ready for you." It is this sweet and all-pervading womanliness of Miss Terry's which fascinates the onlooker. Suddenly, from some dark recess, her voice floats out with an eminently practical suggestion, a shrewd idea as to effect, some playful query. It comes from every quarter of the theatre, and is marvellously thrilling, with all the subtle fascination of what a poet-musician would call its "tone-colour." When the curtain draws up for the Bower scene, and she playfully chides her royal lover, it is more exquisite still. The solitary observer sits and listens to it, the sole representative from the outer world. All this gorgeous pageantry is for him alone; all this wealth of emotion, this story of love and murder, this work of the great poet now passed away—all this is poured into the ears of one man, who sits motionless, entranced, until the tale is told, the play done, and he walks out into the quiet night, quivering with the terrible pathos of *Becket's* end.



"SOMEONE TOUCHED ME ON THE ARM"

A Blessing Disguised.

By F. W. Robinson.

Illustrated by A. Birkenrauth and St. M. Fitzgerald.

WHEN I came home from my fortnight's holiday, amongst Tom Brisket's cows, in Huntingdonshire—once a year, for just fourteen days, do I unbend from the cares of business and seek relaxation far away from Bermondsey—and let myself in, with my patent latchkey, and walked with my usual confidence into my front parlour, you might have knocked me down with a feather. Any feather would have done it—a butterfly's, say—I was thrown so completely off my guard. I had been so confident. I was not in any way prepared for it.

"MY HOUSEKEEPER."

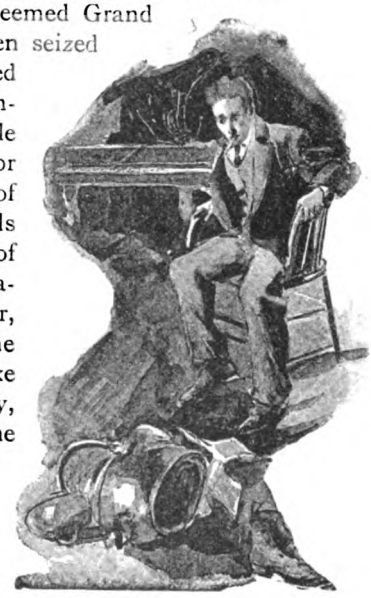
The house was desolate enough, but that was not it. Mrs. Kibbey had failed to put in an appearance at the end of her holiday, although I had wired to her only yesterday that I should be home at precisely 8.15 p.m.; but it was not the unlooked for absence of Mrs. Kibbey—my housekeeper—that upset me thoroughly, oh, no. The gas was not lighted, and the supper was not likely to come off in the absence of Kibbey, certainly, but these were only minor features of a colossal surprise—bagatelles, or anything you may like to call them. Golden Birch Villa, Streatham, S.E., was simply chaos—that is the mildest and easiest way of explaining the matter to begin with. One word suffices—Chaos. It will take a great many words to explain why my little suburban retreat, on which I had prided myself for so many years of my bachelor life, was a mass of conglomerated wreckage. I will be as brief as I can. I am not a prolix man; I know the value of time, and of other people's time. I should not have had a flourishing business in Bermondsey, if I didn't know. Golden Birch Villa, Streatham, then, had been *burgled*. Broken into, despoiled and defaced, was my

little country retreat from the turmoil of town, and it was this which had confronted me after fourteen days of pastoral simplicity, during which I had got very sick of Tom Brisket, and Tom's wife, and Tom's cows, and Tom's children—especially his children—which palled upon one badly and became unbearable, and beastly personal. The country soon tells upon me, and I am not fond of children—yet a while—because—but this is mere babbling of green fields and babies. In describing my return to Golden Birch Villa that evening, I still feel a confusion in the brain which whirls and whirls gently round with me. It was the greatest surprise of my life, the first chapter in a series of surprises, the reader will say presently. I shall leave the story in his hands, and a remarkable story it is, take it altogether. It illustrates clearly the old axiom, that one never knows what is for the best, and that to be robbed—"cleaned out"—and one's premises generally done for, should turn out to be a blessing in disguise, will not be very clearly apparent to the reader until I have explained the whole affair and he has heard my story to the end.

'TOM'S CHILDREN"

At the precise moment of which I write now—8.15—I felt as if utter ruin had overtaken me, as if there were no getting over this gigantic trouble—this shock, as it were, of a moral earthquake. The usual kind of earthquake would have been very much the same kind of article, things a little more askew, perhaps, but not half so "messy." I staggered into an easy chair—after lighting one of my gas-burners—and took a survey of the situation, with my mouth open, my chin on my chest, my knees knocking gently together, and my hair slowly rising upon my head. All the doors had been locked before the departure of Mrs. Kibbey—my housekeeper—and myself on our separate ways of recreation, and all the doors were now wrenched open, and the locks hanging, as it were, by bits of skin! Everything in the room of any real value had vanished like a beautiful dream, and everything "of no value to anyone but the owner" had been tilted into the middle of the room for the convenience of a hasty analysis before departure. The

contents of two desks, of my carved oak sideboard ("late the property of a gentleman"), of my bookcase (to make sure that nothing had been stowed away behind the books), of all the drawers in all the tables, were in one large heap upon the carpet; bills, letters, tablecloths, tablecovers, dinner knives, decanters, chimney ornaments, books, purses, lead pencils, corkscrews, my silver-mounted flute, with all the mounts gone, and the cruets minus their silver tops. Also all the silver spoons, the electros being turned out upon the heap as "non-negotiables." The piano had been split open and gutted—it was an unredeemed Grand—the burglar or burglars having been seized with the suspicion that I had secreted articles of value in the body of the instrument. And so I had! one valuable in particular being a favourite hand or carriage-clock mosaic, and a mass of miniature dials, gold-mounted, the dials at one time having been capable of giving all kinds of unnecessary information, before the death of the manufacturer, who departed this life leaving no one skilled enough in the world to undertake the repairs; but it was a great curiosity, and I set great store by it. So did the burglars, for they had found it and carried it away, along with a large quantity of portable property too numerous to mention in the pages of this magazine without changing their appearance to a kind of "Catalogue of Sale."



"I STAGGERED TO AN EASY CHAIR."

Yes—I was robbed. And I had been so very sure that to leave the premises to take care of themselves was so exceedingly wise an expedient. "Cocksure Kippen" had been my nickname in Bermondsey since I had been in the pawnbrokering, just because I had opinions of my own, and did not call on other people to let me know *their* views of a question upon which I had made up my mind. What did I want with other people's opinions, when I knew my own were ever so much better? But I was a little crestfallen on the present occasion—I will say that. And it was my own fault for going down to Tom's—I will say that too. What

did I want with country air? I had not been ailing anything. I had always considered a fortnight in Tom Brisket's company a frightful waste of time. I was never without an excellent appetite, and I measured forty-one inches round the chest, one inch for every year of my life, I had said jocosely, only yesterday, before I returned to town, but there was no jocosity in me when I was at home again—if this bear-garden could be called home, that is, or made to look like home ever any more!

It was a clean job, the policeman said—quite admiringly—when I had strength to reach the front door and call him in. Why had I not gone round to the station-house, the policeman asked, and told the Inspector I was off for a holiday, as other people generally did? Oh, yes, that was very likely! Why had not I insured in a Burglary Company? Oh, yes—and let no end of people know that there was a furnished house at Streatham with nobody inside of it for a fortnight. Did I think I could trust my housekeeper? Trust Martha Kibbey, who was my father's housekeeper before me—dear, deaf, old, palsy-stricken Kibbey, with a sister in the Cookshops Almshouses, Caterham, and with whom she spent her holiday invariably. Kibbey, whom the policeman and I found upstairs in a fit, in her own bedroom, having it all to herself, like a quiet, unobtrusive old soul as she always was. She *had* come into the house in good time, and realising the position, had rushed upstairs to her room, first of all, to see what had been taken of those worldly goods of her own, in which she was more naturally interested than anybody else. And when she discovered that her chest of drawers had been opened with an indifferent chisel, and that a silver watch of her grandfather's—weighing one pound and a quarter—had disappeared, along with an apple-scoop, also of precious metal, belonging to her late husband, who was "gummy," Mrs. Kibbey became a physical wreck, fit for nothing, and comprehending next to nothing. When she understood that I was in the house—safe and sound—she went into hysterics of thankfulness of so violent a description that I had to leave her with police-constable 906, and run across the road for the doctor.

"'IT WAS A CLEAN JOB,' THE POLICEMAN SAID."

The police made a great fuss over the robbery. The Inspector

called later on and entered all the particulars in a notebook, and looked at the broken doors and the hole in the breakfast parlour shutters, through which admittance had been obtained, and the general turn-out of everything in the middle of each room, and then adding his testimony to the neatness of the job, took his departure, promising to let me know when anything turned up.

"We shall want a complete list of the articles you miss, so that we can send round to the pawnbrokers," he had said before leaving me.

"I'm a pawnbroker myself," I replied.

"Ah! then you'll get one."

"Thankee. Perhaps I shall get one of the thieves too."

"Well, you'll know your own property, I expect, sir," he said, with a most unbecoming grin, as he took himself off the premises. I did not see him again. I hope I never shall, the unsympathetic beast.

Time passed on and brought no tidings of the robbers or the stolen property. I was very much distressed over the whole affair, and my neighbours tried to comfort me by telling me that I could afford the loss, and that it was a good job it had not happened to a poorer man. How did they know I could afford the loss, or that I was not utterly ruined? I had never posed as a wealthy man—I was not wealthy, in the strict sense of the term. I had been only careful, I had spent nothing in waste, and I *had* put by a little money for a rainy day. If people in Bermondsey called me a money-grubber, it was no fault of my own; but there were a few who did, because I held to the strict letter of the law in my contracts. That was praiseworthy, but they could not see it. I believe a few of them were actually glad that I had been robbed.

"HE WAS VERY LAME."

Some six months after the burglary, in the dusk of an early winter's afternoon, a tall, sunken-cheeked man, with a huge white moustache and a vermilion face, which seemed put on expressly to show it up by, came limping into my shop at Bermondsey. He was very lame, or pretended to be, I thought, to throw me off my guard. As if I, Edwin Kippen, was likely to be off guard in business hours, as if it were possible to be off one's guard and get one's living, Bermondsey way.

I told my apprentice, who was behind the counter polishing up a few window goods for next Saturday, to light up, though there was quite half-an-hour's daylight left in the street. But, somehow—such is instinct—I did not like the get-up of this man. I had never seen him before; he did not look "made in Bermondsey," and he was seedy, and a little nervous, though he talked in strident tones, in a Sir Anthony Absolute kind of manner, which made the gas glasses jingle.

"MY APPRENTICE."

"Do you buy articles outright, Mr. Kippen, as well as lend money on them?" he asked abruptly as he entered.

"Yes, sir, I do."

"And at a fair price?"

"Certainly. May I ask what——"

But he was an impetuous man, and so full of his own mission, that he did not wait for me to conclude my inquiry.

"Then what will you give me for this article, money down?" he asked, producing from his pocket, to my complete astonishment, the identical little carriage clock, all dials and complications and internal irregularities, which I had hidden in my piano before going down to Brisket's farm—the clock that had been stolen from my Streatham villa. The same feeling came over me which I had had in that residence on the night of my return. I was swimmy for a moment, and saw stars, and then thought that a thick fog had broken out in Bermondsey. I recovered myself by a mighty effort of will. Here was to be a battle of the wits. Here was one item of my lost property within a hand's grasp of me. I couldn't keep that hand from trembling as I took the clock from him.

"Don't shake it up like a bottle of medicine," said the old gentleman, irritably; "it's a delicate piece of workmanship, and won't stand bobbing up and down like that; it upsets the mechanism, and it isn't easily set right."

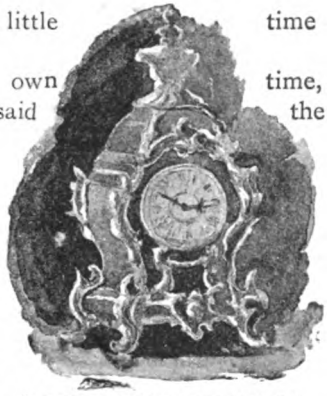
"Is it in working order, then?" I inquired, with suppressed amazement.

"Yes, of course it is."

"Good gracious! is it though?" I said, nearly dropping it in my surprise.

"It tells the days of the month, the dates of the month," he went on, "the phases of the moon, the month of the year, the year of the century, the variations in the weather; it chimes

the quarters, halves, and three-quarters; it plays a waltz after it strikes the hour; it acts as a revolver—I mean as a repeater—and it is mounted in solid gold of 20 carat, almost pure gold. A timepiece fit for a prince, and belonged originally to Louis Seize. What is it worth to you, money down — on the nail—as you tradesmen say?"



"A TIMEPIECE FIT FOR A PRINCE."

"I shall want a little time to consider the matter."

"Take your own time, sir, only, for God's sake, look sharp," said the old man irreverently, as he removed his hat and wiped his forehead with a big, old-fashioned silk bandanna.

"A clock of this description cannot be reckoned up in a hurry," I said. "I haven't examined the works yet."

"You'll find them perfect, wonderfully perfect. But don't breathe into them if you can help it. It affects the waltz movement particularly."

"Oh, does it, indeed?" I said, ironically.

I professed to be examining the works with the closest attention, but I was only resolving on my plan of future action. I was playing with my prey—an angler with his "catch," a cat with a mouse. This was the man who had broken into Golden Birch Villa, and walked off with the pick of the property. An ingenious burglar, who was an expert in clocks, and—I smiled grimly at the joke—who had actually put the article into my own hands again in perfect order. I could have imagined that it was a duplicate copy of mine, and in better condition altogether, had it not been for my private mark, which I was focussing now through a single-barrelled magnifier. I could talk to the man better in this fashion; had I looked him straight in his brazen chaps, my virtuous indignation would have betrayed me. And my policy was to dissemble, like the man in a melodrama.

"You have had this a long time in the family, I suppose?" I said quietly—very quietly—but tentatively.

"It's not new. Any fool can see that it is a Louis Seize clock, and of considerable value."

"It's a valuable thing in its way, no doubt, but it would suit a West End house better than my establishment."

"I know that, sir, as well as you do," was the testy reply, "but I haven't got the time to run to the other side of the water, and I want money in a hurry—in a great hurry, or I should not have come to you," he added bluntly.

"Are you living in this neighbourhood?"

"What business is that of yours?" he cried. "What—yes, I do live in the neighbourhood—round the corner in Tan Yard Road—if you want to know. No. 239 is my address, if it is likely to do you any good, and my name is Youson. I see you have your doubts as to my rightful possession of the article; pawnbrokers are all alike, have exactly the same tricks of the trade. I know their ways, no one better, and I know what you are going to say to me next."

"I really do not think that is possible."

"You'll tell me it is unsaleable—that not one in ten thousand would think of buying such a thing—that at the price of the metal it will be worth to you—well, what the devil is it worth? You have been staring at it long enough to know now."

"I am sorry you are in such a tremendous hurry," I said, nettled a little by his unceremonious deportment.

"I *am* in a hurry. It is a question of life and death to me that I should have that money quickly, don't you see? No—you don't see—how can you see—how can you know anything about me, save that I want money? You see that fast enough. Well, sir, you are welcome to your knowledge," he went on excitedly, "and I am not clever enough to disguise it, though I know you'll take advantage of my extremity—a man of business, and in your line of business, is sure to do that. But give me a fair price. I—I—don't want the money for myself, I don't want a penny of it—shan't take a penny of it, by God!"

This was an odd way of trying to get rid of stolen goods, but it was ingenious, and there was a refreshing novelty in the style of it. But I was not the man to be done. I flattered myself that I was as shrewd as this artful and red-faced old fox, and that I held the trump card in my hand to play at any moment.

"I have a friend only a few doors off who will know the value of this article far better than I," I said; "he is a collector of—of clocks, and will give you a better price than I can afford. This is not in my line at all; I should never get a bid for it. Ten pounds would be too much for me to pay, or even to lend upon it."

"It's worth a hundred pounds, you know that well enough."

"I should not like to say what it is actually worth. I don't buy things like these without Bender's opinion; he's a sleeping partner of mine, and only just round the corner."

"Ah, is he?"

"Heaven forgive me these dreadful lies," I whispered softly to myself.

"Let us go to him," he said, snatching the clock suddenly from my hands. And I had never intended to let the property get out of my possession again! This man was adroit; he might be one too many for me after all, if I betrayed the slightest doubt of him, or made anything like a scene. He was fidgeting with something in the right pocket of his snuffy, old greatcoat too—perhaps there was a pistol there—I was almost sure there was a pistol!

"Yes, let us go to him, Mr. Youson," I said. "I'm sure he or I will make you a handsome offer; he's just the fellow to put down his hundreds. Isaac, get me my hat—any hat or cap, anything you can find—only look alive. I am going round to Mr. Bender's with this gentleman."

"PEOPLE WERE STREAMING HOME FROM WORK."

"Where's Ben——" began that stupid ass of a boy, but I checked him with a malevolent and meaning glance, and the youth, looking frightened, dived into the back parlour in search of my head-gear. He came out with a straw hat, with a ticket on it, but I did not notice anything in my excitement. I pined to be in the open with this miscreant, who had put the clock into his pocket. With a policeman in view, on the far horizon at the end of the street, my happiest hour would have arrived.

We sallied forth together, I keeping very close to him, lest he should grow suspicious and make up his mind to run. Every minute did I expect that he would plunge into the middle of the road and tear madly down the street. And it was a trouble to keep by the side of him; the people were streaming home from work, were out marketing, looking for something cheap for tea or supper to be bought off the

barrows which were flanking the kerbstones. Side by side, we got jostled occasionally, the pavement being narrow and the people thickish, and twice I caught surreptitiously at the hem of his garment when I thought that we were going to be separated. And, as usual, there was not a policeman on the beat anywhere—no sign of official force—nothing but men and women, boys and girls, the boys terribly in the way, and after the girls!

"Do you call this a few doors off?" said Youson, snappishly, at last.

"Comparatively—oh, yes."

"It looks like half-a-mile," he grumbled.

"Another minute or two, Mr. Youson. I am sorry you are so pressed for time."

"So am I. Not but what I have had about enough of your company, with that ridiculous hat of yours over your eyes," he added, ungraciously. "I wish I had never come near your infernal shop. You are about the slowest tradesman I have ever encountered."

"It does not pay to be too fast in my line of business."

"Oh, I don't blame you, I don't blame you, sir; I only say I wish——what are you jumping at? Ain't you well? Are you subject to anything?" he asked. "Spasms or twitches?"

I had seen a policeman on the other side of the way, standing under the shop-blind of a cheesemonger's shop, talking to the young man with the apron who was in charge, grinning from ear to ear with him, and grossly neglecting his duty, which was to keep a sharp look out at what was going on up and down the street.

"Where are you off to now?" asked Mr. Youson.

"Bender's is over the way."

"What, the butterman's?"

"No, no, but just by there. Come along. Mind this horse and cart; I should not like you to get run over with *that* in your pocket," I said, almost incoherently.

Mr. Youson gave a short double-knock sort of a laugh.

"What, you are getting anxious about the clock, after all?"

"I am indeed."

We had reached the other side of the way, and the policeman had turned his back upon us—just like him!—and was staring straight into the shop. There was a row of egg-boxes full of eggs of all sizes and prices and ages in front of the premises. Suddenly, I sprang like a panther upon my prey, flung my arms

round Youson's neck, and yelled, at the top of my lungs, for "Help!" and for the "Police!"

"Damn—confound it, sir—what!"—gurgled forth Youson, in his supreme astonishment; then we both staggered, our feet went from under us, and, locked in each other's arms, we sat down, all of a heap, in the "28 a shilling, not warranted," compartment, and a hideous crackling, as of a subdued and squashy landslip, went on beneath our writhing forms.

"Oh, good Lord!" exclaimed the young butterman, throwing up both arms in his despair, "here's a go!"

"OUR FEET WENT FROM UNDER US."

"Here—hullo—what the blazes are you two blokes hup to?" cried the policeman, catching us both by the collars of our coats and shaking us; "this is a nice place to begin larking, I must say."

"It is not larking," I exclaimed, getting on my feet, a hideous mass of egg-shells and indifferent egg-flip; "it's highway robbery! This man is in possession of my property—proceeds of a burglary—I'm Kippen, the pawnbroker, No. 319; he's got my clock in his pocket now. I—I give him in charge, constable, I give him in charge! Why don't you catch hold of him?"

"The man's mad!" ejaculated Mr. Youson, "raving mad. Somebody catch hold of *him*."

There was a big crowd round us—it doesn't take long to get up a mob in Bermondsey—and the proprietor of the cheesemonger's shop, who had emerged from his caves of double Gloucester, was wanting to make a case of his own out of it all, and run the two of us in. The policeman was bewildered, and Mr. Youson was beside himself with ungovernable rage.

"He has got the clock in his pocket," I repeated.

"Yes, I know I have a clock in my pocket," he spluttered, "you—you rascal—you unmitigated——"

"It's my clock. I can swear to it," I yelled. "I've plenty of witnesses to prove it's mine."

"You'd better both come round to the station-house," said the policeman; "do you charge him with taking your clock, sir?" he added to me.

"I do."

"Very well."

We went off to the station-house, Mr. Youson and I, the policeman and the cheesemonger, and a grand procession in the rear of about fifteen hundred persons with nothing to do. The cheesemonger and I conversed amicably *en route*, when he had become thoroughly convinced that I was a brother tradesman, resident at the far end of the street. He understood the case then—he grasped the situation—but he could not for the life of him make out, he said, why we had sat down in the middle of his eggs to argue the point. Who was answerable for all the damage, he should like to know? I didn't know, I told him, and I was damaged materially so far as wearing apparel went, I delicately intimated, by the indifferent quality of his eggs. That you cannot get reliable eggs for twenty-eight a shilling in the winter season, in Bermondsey, is a miserable fact, and discreditable to the reputation of French poultry.

I had never been in such a mess in my life, but I was in a greater mess the next day. It's a long story, that of the examination at the police station, and I will spare the reader the harassing details. Mr. Youson, in his confusion, made a very rambling statement of how he came into possession of the clock, prejudiced the Inspector against him, and got himself locked up, and I was told to call the next day at the Police Court in Blackman Street and explain matters, and bring my witnesses. I did so, and brought a neighbour or two who had seen the clock upon my mantelpiece at Streatham, and I clinched the argument with Mrs. Kibbey, who shed copious tears during the evidence, till the magistrate asked her sharply what she was snivelling at, when she fainted dead away under the reproof, and had to be carried from the witness-box into the fresh air to recover.

"MRS KIBBEY SHED COPIOUS TEARS."

It was a clear case, however, against Mr. Youson, everybody considered, and he was remanded for a week, without bail, whilst

enquiries as to his antecedents were to be vigorously made. There was a very grave suspicion, the Inspector whispered confidentially into my ear, along with some strong puffs of gin and peppermint which impregnated his breathing apparatus dreadfully, that Youson was one of a desperate gang of Lambeth burglars, for whom the police had been searching for some time.

There was a woman's scream in court when Youson was remanded, and the magistrate, who was certainly in a bad temper that morning, said that he would commit anybody for contempt who made such a noise as that again, and then the next case was called, and I was outside in Blackman Street, Borough.

I had, with some difficulty and a little pleasure, lodged the hysterical Mrs. Kibbey in a Streatham omnibus, and was making my way thoughtfully down King Street to my Bermondsey premises, when someone touched me on the arm. I looked round, and was considerably surprised to find a pale grave young woman of some thirty years of age, poorly but neatly clad, keeping step with me on the narrow pavement.

"MR YOUSON'S DAUGHTER."

"I beg pardon, sir, but you are Mr. Kippen, I think?"

"Yes, my name is Kippen."

"I wanted to speak to you. I wanted so much to see you before this case came on. My name is Youson, Lucinda Youson," she said, hurriedly.

"God bless me, is it though? You are ——"

"Mr. Youson's daughter."

"My good woman, I hope you are not going to bother me," I said, imploringly; "the case is out of my hands. I am bound over to prosecute. It was a shameful robbery."

"My father did not rob you, Mr. Kippen. Does he look like thief?"

"I don't know what he looks like."

"You don't know the truth," she said quickly. "Perhaps you don't know what kindness is, or charity—some people don't. You would not wait for him to explain, and you have nearly killed us with anxiety. We—we did not know what had become of him."

"Killed *us*," I repeated, vacantly; "are there many of you?"

"My sister-in-law and her little boy, and myself. And the boy is dying—that's the worst of it—oh! poor little chap, that is the worst of it! And his grandfather was so fond of him; he was selling the clock so that the boy and his mother should go away to Madeira, the only chance to save him, sir. The only chance that was left.

THE BOY IS DYING

"And so he thought he would sell something valuable that did not belong to him, and go to Madeira at my expense, and——"

"You must not say my father stole it—you dare not!" she cried, and her eyes literally flashed fire at me. This young woman was as impulsive as her felonious father. Here was another scene likely to spring up in the street if I were not particularly careful, and I had had enough of demonstrations in the public highway.

"My good woman, what is it that you want with me?"

"I want you to hear how that clock came into my father's possession, and then—and then prosecute him if you can. And at your peril, sir—please to understand, at your peril, though I utter no threats."

"It strikes me you do."

"No—no—I don't mean that," she cried. "Heaven help me, I am almost distracted, I am not myself to-day, and you will listen? It will not cost you anything to listen to me, sir, will it?"

She laid her hand upon my arm entreatingly—she had very earnest brown eyes, and I was not, as I thought, wholly unsusceptible to the influence of brown eyes upon the nervous system. And as she had delicately intimated that listening would not cost me anything, why should I object to listen to her? We were both going the same way. Of course, I should hear a good round-about story—a second edition of her father's rigmarole which had prejudiced the magistrate against him—but I was not bound in any way to believe a word that she said.

It sounded uncommonly like truth though, and took me very much aback when she said suddenly—

"Yes, that clock was stolen from you. We knew it was stolen—and who stole it."

"But you just said——"

"That my father did not steal it. God bless him, no. He did not know—did not dream that we knew—did not know anything about it in any way—does not to this day. It was his property, he thought—all that was left of any value in the world to him; and it had belonged to his son—his eldest son, my half-brother, who——"

"Who was the thief. The infernal——'

"Please don't, sir. He is dead."

"Oh! I beg your pardon. I didn't—know," I found myself saying in an apologetic manner which really surprised myself.

"'I WAS ALWAYS HANDY WITH MY FINGERS.'"

"Yes, sir, he was the thief," she said, sinking her voice into a whisper almost. "He committed suicide two months ago abroad, but we have kept the truth back from father. He wasn't to know—it would have broken his heart, he was so proud of his son, always. But before my half-brother died—he had gone to Canada, to make a home for Kitty and her boy, he said—he wrote to Kitty that he was a repentant man, and that, unknown to any of us, he had been for years in bad hands, working with them, stealing with them. Our poor father thought he was a traveller for a Manchester firm, and so did we, until that terrible confession came across the sea to us. We were not to tell father—we were to make all the restitution that we could presently; he would send full instructions what we were to do by the next mail, he wrote, and the next mail only told us of his death."

"And your father?"

"Kitty and I have fought hard to keep the truth from him—the truth would have broken his heart. Why the news of his son's

death nearly did, sir. And he has had so much trouble—so many losses too—and we have been for the last six months so very hard driven to live. Of late days father wished to sell this clock, but we would not let him—we were sure it had been stolen, and we hoped to find the owner some day."

"But not like this, I suppose?"

"Oh! no, not like this. But when little Willie got very ill; when residence abroad for a few months might save him, the doctor said—it was only yesterday he told us that—father took the clock out of the house unknown to us, and—and came at once to you. He is so very impetuous, poor father."

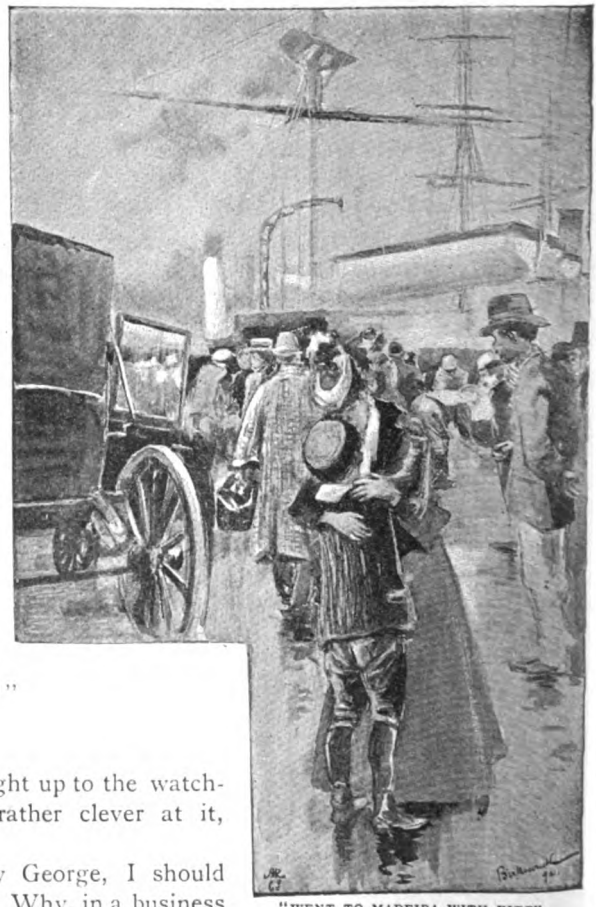
"Ah! is he? And who put the clock in working order, may I ask?"

"I did."

"You!"

"I was brought up to the watch-making—I am rather clever at it, they say."

"Clever. By George, I should think you were! Why, in a business like mine you would be invaluable."



"WENT TO MADEIRA WITH KITTY AND THE BOY."

"I was always handy with my fingers."

"So was your half-brother—it seems to run in the family."

"Oh!"

"I beg pardon," I said, for the second time. "I—I did not mean to say that. It slipped out promiscuously."

"Never mind, sir—never mind," she said hurriedly. "What are you going to do? Pray tell me what you think of doing when I prove the truth of this."

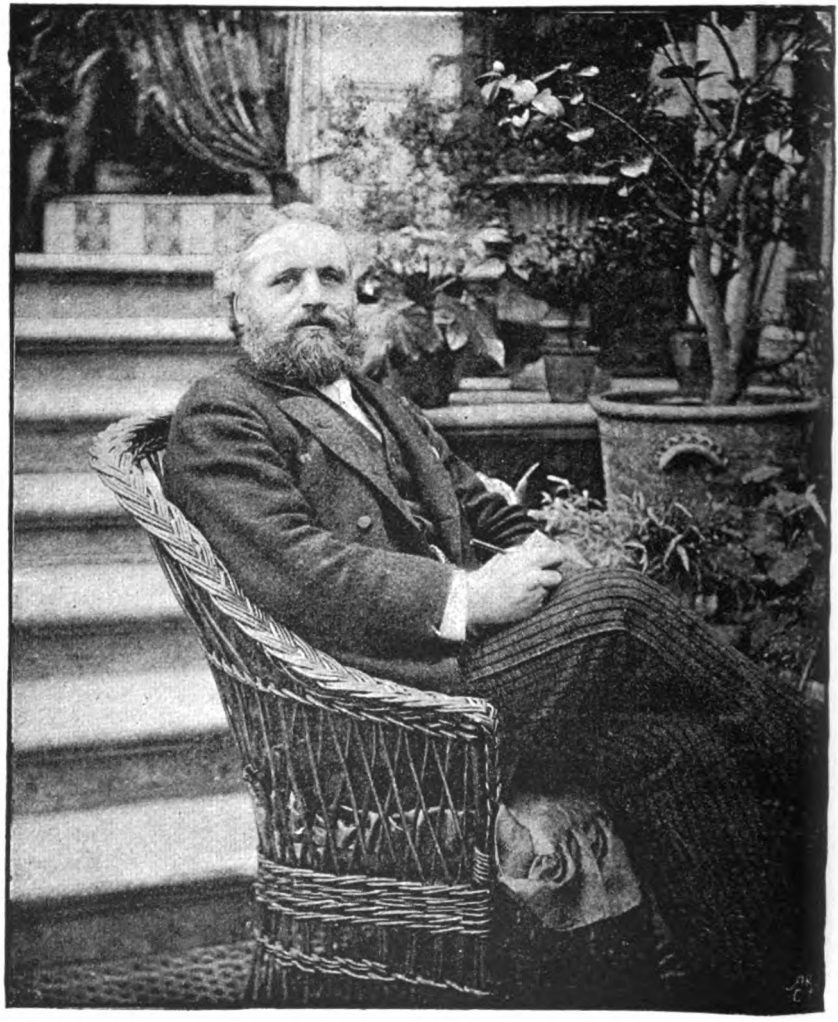
"If it's all true—and I believe it is already, Miss Youson—I—I am going to withdraw from the prosecution, and ask your father to bring an action against me for illegal detention."

"Oh! he would never think of such a thing."

And he never did. The story was quite true, every word of it, and we arranged to keep it from the old man, so far as the peculiar profession of his first-born was concerned. He never knew *that*. I got rather intimate with the Youson family by degrees, although our acquaintance had begun so inauspiciously. Rather intimate, I say—well, very intimate, rather! would be a clearer expression, if a trifle inelegant.

"LIVING WITH HER SISTER NOW."

For I married that girl, and pensioned off Mrs. Kibbey, and I never did such a fine stroke of business in all my life. The old man—he was a fine old fellow, too—went to Madeira with Kitty and the boy, and I bore Lucinda off to Streatham. She is one of the best of wives, and so very handy in the business too—saves me a heap of money. It was a lucky day for me when that rascal of a half-brother of hers broke burglariously into Golden Birch Villa, and took away everything that had an atom's worth of precious metal in its composition. It was a blessing very much in disguise, but it has answered its purpose thoroughly well. I am as happy as the day is long—and so is Lucinda. Everybody tells me that I secured a treasure when I took her for better, for worse. Everybody but Mrs. Kibbey—past housekeeper, and living with her sister now in the Cookshops Almshouses at Caterham—and she says I could have done much better for myself, long before, if I had only looked about me in a sensible and practical sort of way.



MR. GEORGE NEWNES.

"Lions in Their Dens."

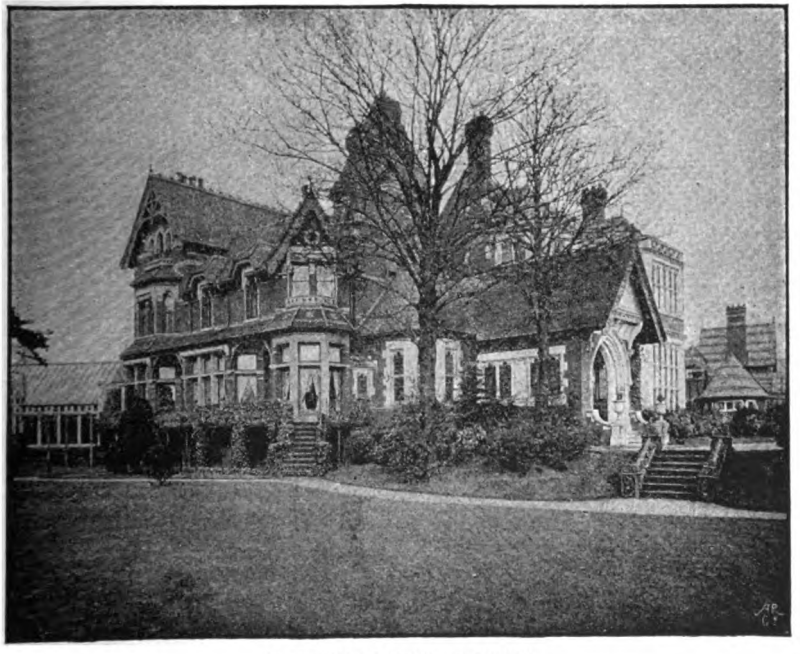
III.—GEORGE NEWNES AT PUTNEY.

By Raymond Blathwayt.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.

(Photographs by Messrs. Fradelle & Young.)

AS I toiled up the hill which leads to Putney Heath, I met a small boy, of whom I asked the way to Mr. George Newnes's house. To my astonishment he did not know where it was. I gazed at him more in sorrow than in anger. "What! not know where *Tit-*



MR. NEWNES'S HOUSE AT PUTNEY.

Bits lives!" a smart lad standing by ejaculated, as he pointed out to me the right direction in which to go. "George Newnes! 'im wot writes *Tit-Bits!* wy I thought everyone knowed w'ere 'ee lived!" I thanked him, and wandered on half-a-mile or so until

I reached the beautiful house which the "writer" of *Tit-Bits* built for himself some years ago. Here I was received by Mr. George Newnes with a welcome which left nothing to be desired in the way of hearty kindness. Mr. Newnes is a man of middle height, very good-looking, with auburn beard, and hair dashed with grey. Though exceedingly wealthy, he is not, as somebody has well expressed it, "beastly rich." No feeling of the oppression of newly-acquired wealth flooded my soul as I walked about the pretty house and grounds in his company. He and his surroundings have the good taste not to obtrude themselves upon the casual visitor. The man is simplicity itself, and the most genial and cordial of hosts. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit, nor was it without infinite interest, for George Newnes is a companion always amusing, and with always something new and original to say. As we wandered through the beautiful grounds, some of which are reclaimed from the wild heath which stretches for miles round the house, he pointed out to me the curious obelisk, grey and time-worn, which still perpetuates the memory of the historic mansion once known as "Fireproof." For it was here that George III. and Queen Charlotte once breakfasted in peace in the drawing room upstairs, whilst the dining room below was purposely ignited to prove that the house was really fireproof. Upon one side of the house stand the stables, just beyond them a beautiful covered lawn-tennis court lighted by electricity and heated with hot water, in which play can go on by night as well as by day, in winter just as much as in summer. "We miss this tennis court dreadfully when we are in Devonshire," said Mr. Newnes, as we quitted the beautiful hall for the

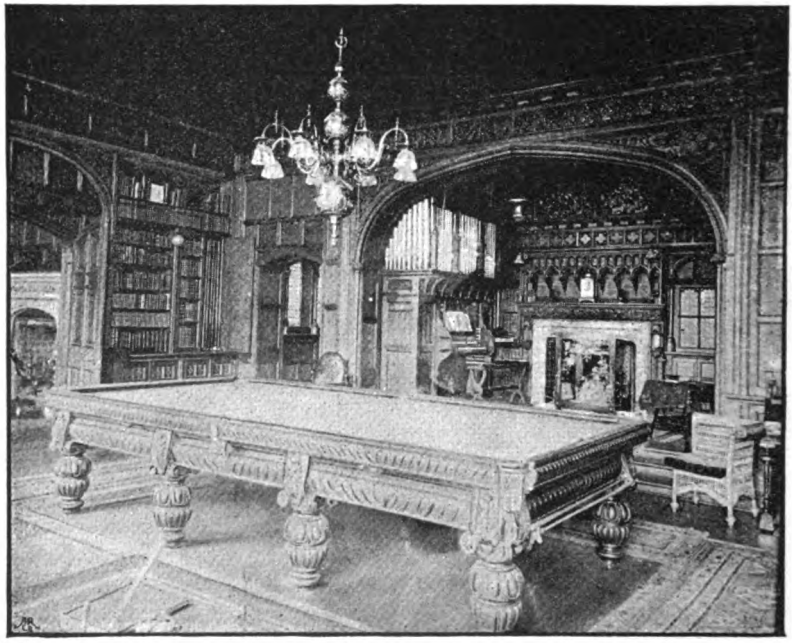
THE OBELISK IN THE GARDEN.

MR. NEWNES.

house. "I am myself devoted to tennis and golfing, and, indeed, I sometimes think it is that that has helped me to get through so much work. Good players generally make good workers," he added, with a laugh. "Now will you come and join our party at luncheon?" and as he spoke he led the way into a handsome dining-room. At luncheon the conversation dealt chiefly with sport and games, to my own great relief be it added, for the dweller in the tents of the literary world hears but little of the ordinary topics of conversation, and becomes suffocated, if he be not to the manner born, with the nauseating cant and self-sufficiency which is so typical of the literary world of to-day, and more especially typical of its younger members. But at George Newnes's house you hear but little shop. We discussed golf and its rapidly-increasing popularity, the newest "serve" at tennis, and some of the most remarkable cricket scores made during the past season.

MRS. NEWNES.

The host joined eagerly in our talk until interrupted by the servant, who brought in a message. Quitting us for a moment, he returned with a smiling apology, and told me that in that brief space of time he had transacted a piece of business which certainly was not without its interest. A gentleman, it appeared—the son of a celebrated *littérateur* of a past day—had called to show some beautiful drawings by the celebrated "Dicky" Doyle, a relation of Dr. Conan Doyle. With Mr. Newnes—and it is

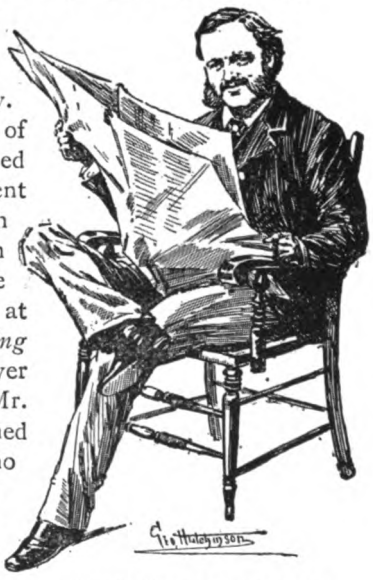


THE BILLIARD ROOM.

thoroughly characteristic of the man—to close with a good bargain is but the work of a moment, and therefore I was not surprised, as he placed the dainty pictures before me, to learn that he had purchased them for reproduction in his world-famed magazine. After luncheon, Mr. Newnes suggested that we should retire to his billiard-room, to reach which we had to pass through his own special sanctum in which he dictates his letters, &c., to his private secretary—energetic Mr. William Plank, who has been with him for five hard working years—while he walks up and down the room. "I can always think better whilst I walk," he explained to me; "indeed, I have recently had the study lengthened to give me

more room." By this time we were in the billiard-room, wherein stands a large English organ with upwards of four hundred pipes. And in this room, prowling round and round the billiard-table like a couple of wild beasts—for I also, like my host, think best upon my legs—and occasionally cannoning up against one another and recoiling with a laugh and a start, George Newnes told me the history of his interesting and successful life.

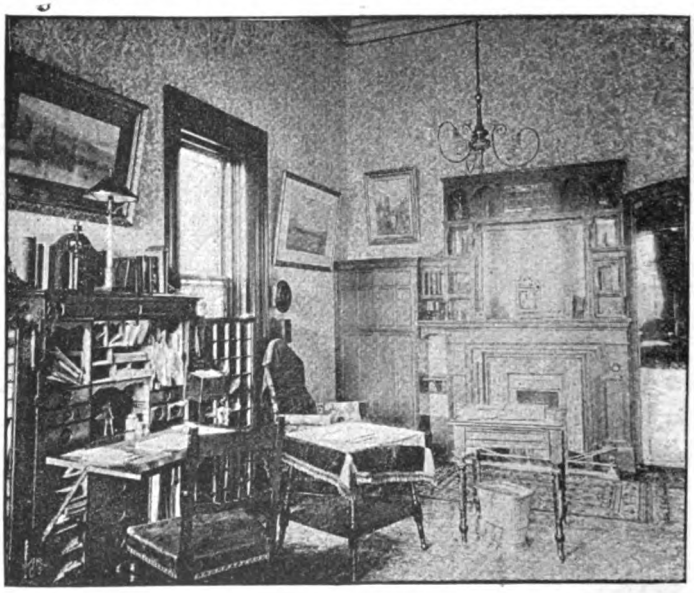
"My father," he began, "was, at the time of my birth, the minister of Glenorchy Chapel, Matlock Bath. He was a very able man, and the best informed man you could meet. He kept me at school till I was about sixteen. I finished up at the City of London School, and, curiously enough, I am going to-night to reply for the House of Commons at a banquet given by the John Carpenter Club in honour of the Home Secretary, who was a City of London School boy. My father put me into a house of business in the City, at which I remained for a number of years, and then I went down to Lancashire to open up a branch of the business there. I settled in Manchester and married, there. One night, in 1880, when I was sitting at home reading the *Manchester Evening News*—and, by the way, it has never occurred to me before," added Mr. Newnes, as a sudden thought flashed into his mind, "the very people who printed that paper were the same people who afterwards printed *Tit-Bits* for ten years—I came across a story, or some interesting account, which very much pleased me. I read it to my wife and said, 'There, that's what I call a real "tit-bit." This paper, but for it, is to-day decidedly dull, because there is absolutely no news to put in it. Now, why cannot a paper be brought out which should contain nothing but "tit-bits" similar to this?'"



THE CONCEPTION OF "TIT BITS."

"And that really," said I, much interested, as Mr. George Newnes paused for a moment in his journey round the billiard-table, and gazed absently at me while I lit a cigar and threw myself into an armchair, "and that really is how *Tit-Bits* came to be first thought of?"

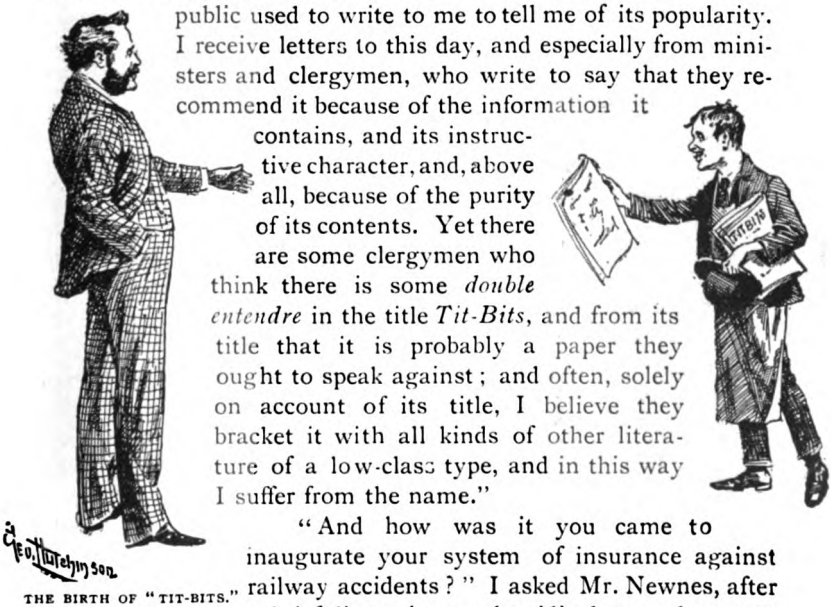
"Yes," he replied, as he started off once more, and I rose to follow in his track, "that was the *first* idea of my little green paper. But I was a whole year before I was able to carry it out. I was very busy in other matters, and had not much time to attend to it. But I never lost sight of the idea, and ever and anon the word 'tit-bits' would come to me with the force of a warning dream. I worked continually at the idea in my mind, and all my leisure thoughts were given up to it. In fact, I was constantly afraid—so convinced was I that the idea was a good one—that someone would bring it out before I could do so, and every Saturday



THE STUDY.

morning, the usual day for new weekly papers, I used to look almost with painful anxiety to see whether there was a placard announcing that such a paper had appeared. But, however, nothing of the sort was brought out. The more I thought of it the more enamoured I became of the idea, till, in October, 1881, the first number appeared." And as he spoke Mr. Newnes handed me the very first number of the now celebrated paper. "As soon as it was fairly started," continued my host, "I gave up my other business and devoted myself to the editing and publishing of the paper. At first, the chief pieces in it were selected from books and periodicals—any sources, in short, that were

not copyright. I would get an anecdote from one book, and something else from another, anything interesting, in fact, from wherever I could pick it up; of course, now we have a large list of original contributors, but at first that was the way in which it was compiled. In the early days, naturally enough, its circulation was confined chiefly to Manchester. There it simply 'caught on' immediately, and sold like wildfire. Why, the newspaper boys' brigade," continued Mr. Newnes, now fairly excited at the memory of that eventful Saturday morning, "sold something like 5,000 copies in two hours of the first number in Manchester alone. They came rushing back to the office, where I sat anxiously awaiting their news, full of the wonderful result. *Tit-Bits* was then, I felt certain, an assured success, and the public used to write to me to tell me of its popularity. I receive letters to this day, and especially from ministers and clergymen, who write to say that they recommend it because of the information it contains, and its instructive character, and, above all, because of the purity of its contents. Yet there are some clergymen who think there is some *double entendre* in the title *Tit-Bits*, and from its title that it is probably a paper they ought to speak against; and often, solely on account of its title, I believe they bracket it with all kinds of other literature of a low-class type, and in this way I suffer from the name."



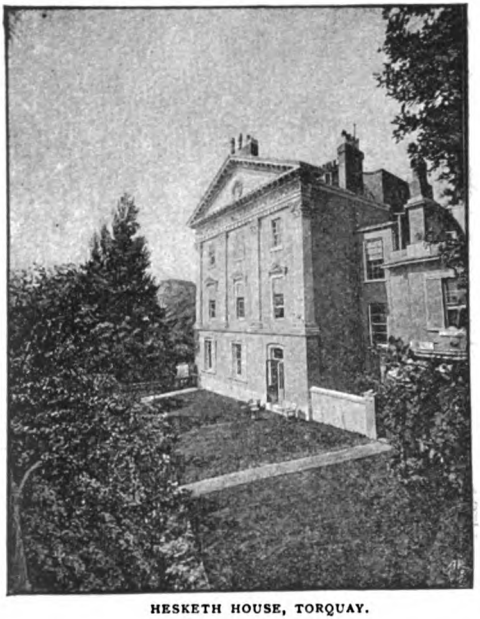
THE BIRTH OF "TIT-BITS."

"And how was it you came to inaugurate your system of insurance against railway accidents?" I asked Mr. Newnes, after a brief discussion on the ridiculous and narrow-minded behaviour of these worthy clerics. "It was in this way," he replied, as he brought himself to an anchor against the billiard-table, where he rested for a brief moment. "It was in this way: A woman wrote to me saying that her husband had been killed on the railway, and as he had a copy of *Tit-Bits* upon him at the time, she asked whether I would make her some allowance of money. At once the idea of an insurance system occurred to me, and you know now how widespread this system has become."

I smiled as I noted how in each case his wonderful successes are owing not mere to the flash of a striking idea than to the wonderful promptitude which follows on the thought; how remarkable an instance his whole career affords of the benefit and wisdom of striking while the iron is hot.

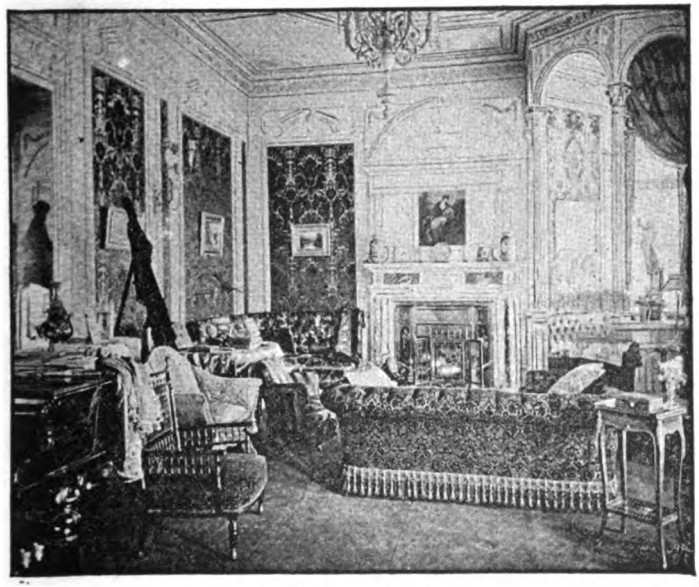
"And then after *Tit-Bits* came the *Review of Reviews*, I suppose?" I queried, as my host jotted down some notes in his pocket-book.

"Yes," he replied, as he once more took the floor. "That was one of the quickest arranged things I have ever heard of. It was all done in a month. I was staying down at Torquay, where I have a house for the winter, and Mr. Stead wrote to me to say he contemplated leaving the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and would like to be associated with me in some journalistic scheme. He sent descriptions of three which were passing through his mind, asking if I would care to take either of them into consideration. I replied by return, saying that I did not care for two of them much, but that I was delighted with the third. I then and there told him the terms upon which I would work with him. He wrote back, saying that he would accept them, and I came to London the following week, in order that I might make arrangements, and in thirty days from the first proposal of the idea, the *Review of Reviews* was published. At first it was decided to call it *The Sixpenny Monthly*, with a sub-title, *A Review of the Reviews;* as such, indeed, it appeared upon the cover till the day before going to press, which was a Sunday. I was so convinced that the title ought to be reversed, and that it should be *The Review of Reviews, a Sixpenny Monthly*, that I went over and waylaid Mr. Stead



HESKETH HOUSE, TORQUAY.

as he was coming with his family out of church. I explained my views to him, and in a few minutes he agreed that I was right, and the title was altered to that which has now become so familiar. Well, when the *Review of Reviews* went out of my field of vision, I had made certain arrangements with people for publishing magazine work, and so on, and I wanted something to take its place. Then came to me a very old and favourite idea of mine—the idea of a *magazine with a picture on every page!* I engaged the services of Mr. Greenhough Smith, now my assistant editor on the *Strand Magazine*, who had the idea

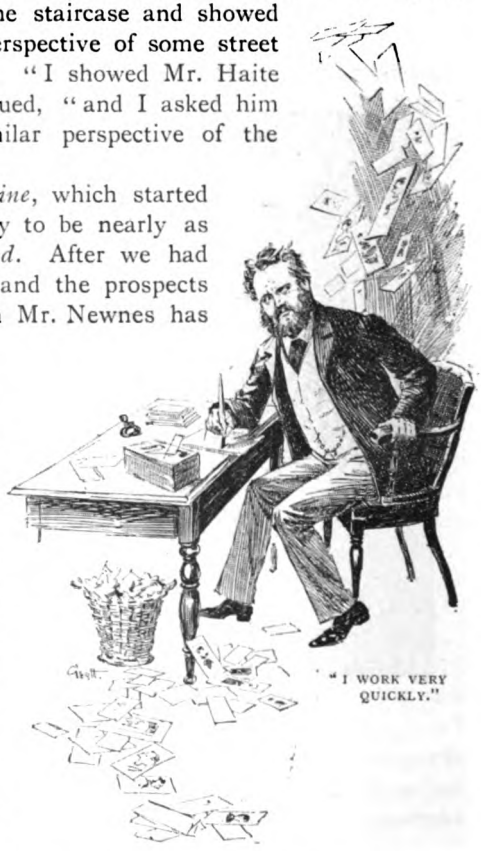


THE DRAWING-ROOM.

of largely producing translations from foreign authors, and as soon as the *Review of Reviews* had gone, I was at work on the new venture."

"And, with regard to its title, Mr. Newnes," said I, "you are great on titles, are you not?" "I attach great importance to them, certainly," he vigorously replied. "I thoroughly agree with Shakespeare that there is much in a name. Why, indeed, should names be valueless? They are as great facts as anything else in the constitutions of humanity. And in the journalistic world a name is half the battle. *The Strand* was a good title, it appeared to me, short, and at the same time attractive.

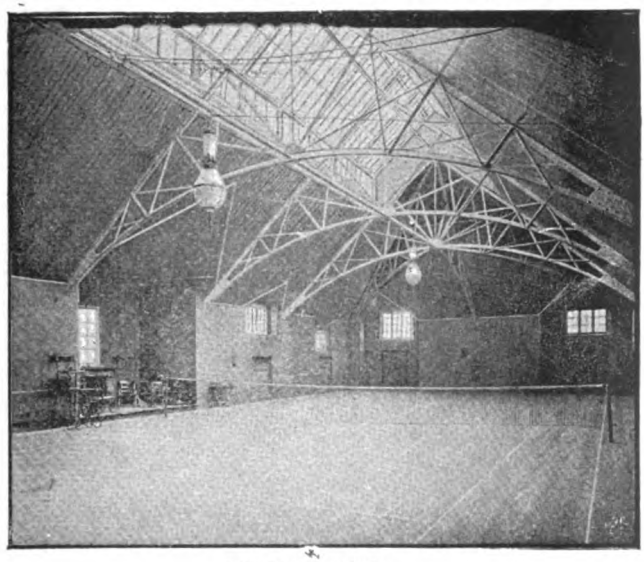
After all, it is through the Strand itself that the tide of life flows fullest and strongest and deepest. I felt that with a good picture on the cover it would sell well on the book-stalls. The picture was rather difficult, and much depended on that picture. At first I did not succeed in getting the artist to embody my idea of a picture of a street. Now I had here at home an oil painting which I thought would help him." And as he spoke, Mr. Newnes led me to the staircase and showed me a very charming perspective of some street in an English town. "I showed Mr. Haite this picture," he continued, "and I asked him if he could do a similar perspective of the Strand."



"I WORK VERY QUICKLY."

The Picture Magazine, which started with this year, is likely to be nearly as successful as *The Strand*. After we had discussed the position and the prospects of the new paper which Mr. Newnes has started to fill the place in the Radical journalistic ranks of the *P.M.G.*, we drifted into a general conversation on his habits of life, his occupations, and the varied qualities which go to the making of a successful business man, the future of popular journalism, and the like. "How do you manage to keep all your irons hot?" I asked my host; "you edit three papers, you are a member of Parliament, you build railways up the cliffs of popular watering-places, you play games, you do everything. How is it all done, pray, Mr. Newnes? What is the secret of your life?" "Well," he slowly replied, and with a certain shy hesitation, for though prompt and energetic enough in actual business, no more modest man, or one more reluctant to speak of himself and his doings

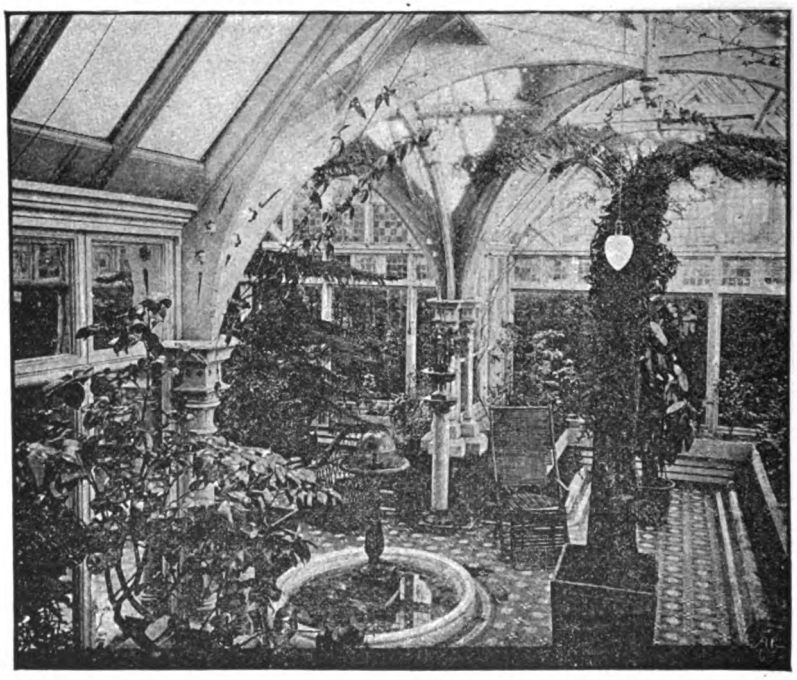
walks this earth—"well, though I don't want to boast about it, yet the simple fact is, I work very quickly, and I get through my business much faster than most men do. I make up my mind, form my plans, and arrive at conclusions very rapidly. With regard to my editorial work, for instance, all 'copy' for the papers is sifted for me at the office, then it is sent up here, where I work three days a week, selecting that which I think shall go in, and marking it for press. I dictate the 'Answers to Correspondents' page to my private secretary. This page always takes up three hours a week. I get through my editorial, parliamentary and business work, and manage to get a good deal of leisure besides. Golf, tennis and chess take up my leisure. When I am in the country I have all my work sent there. The fact is, *I work hard and I play hard*, and I believe each is equally necessary for good health and real happiness. Curiously enough, I do not believe that naturally I am of a very systematic nature, but so much business forces me to be so."



THE TENNIS COURT.

"And as to the future of journalism generally, and of such papers as yours in particular, Mr. Newnes?" I queried. "With the spread of education and the increase of Board Schools, there is a great change coming over the masses, is there not?" "I think this," he replied, "that many of the papers of the day are developing too much the gambling and lottery spirit, which I regard as a very evil one, and would not for a moment countenance. I think, as you say, that the Board Schools have immensely increased the number of buyers of papers of this kind, and it is a great source of

satisfaction to me that I should have inaugurated a popular paper which should be taken largely by the masses, and which is absolutely pure. When I came out with *Tit-Bits* there was not a single popular paper containing fun or jokes or anything of the kind—except the illustrated ones—but what relied more or less upon prurient matter to tickle the fancies of prurient minds. Besides, my idea is that, just at present, the Board Schools tend to a certain hardness and narrowness of character, which is perhaps softened down by the development by these papers of the

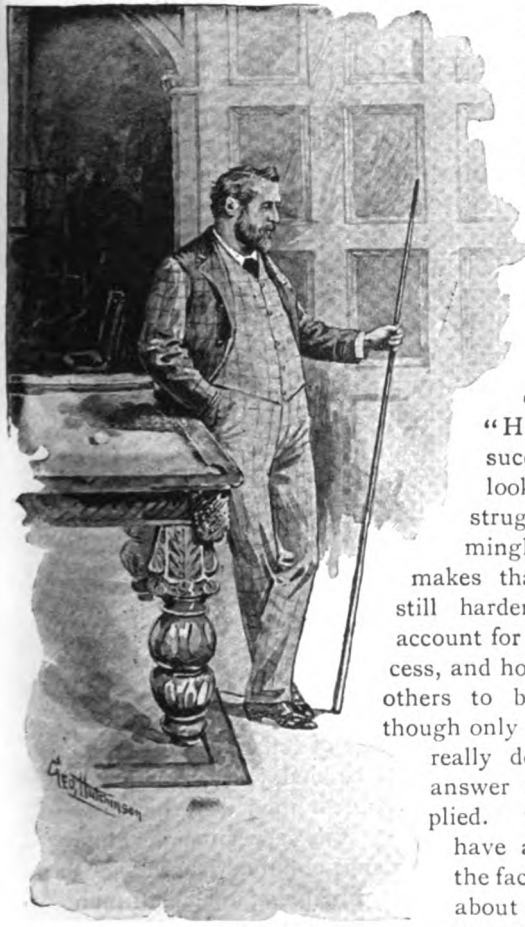


THE CONSERVATORY.

lighter side of human nature. *Tit-Bits*, I have reason to know, has in many cases induced the study of some science or literature on the part of a man or boy who has read some interesting 'tit-bit' on one of these subjects, and has desired, naturally enough, to know more about it."

"Will it ever be possible, Mr. Newnes, do you think, to provide the masses with the higher journalism, with a sort of *Saturday Review*, or *Nineteenth Century?*" I asked. "I don't think," he slowly replied, shaking his head, "I don't think, Radical as I

am, and absolute believer in the sovereignty of the people, that the masses will ever take to any paper which consists mainly of essays or leaders. They want things served up with other interesting matter, and with as much of the personal element as it is possible to give them. The masses still incline entirely to the lighter side of literature. They work hard enough in everyday life, their recreation and their literature *must*, therefore, be as light as possible."



IN THE BILLIARD-ROOM.

"And now, Mr. Newnes, for one more question—a good long one," I laughingly added. "Having all your life been so successful yourself, as you look round London, with the struggle for existence, and the mingling of classes which makes that struggle for existence still harder, how do you really account for your own wonderful success, and how would you recommend others to be successful too, even though only in a small way?" "I really don't know how I can answer that question," he replied. "The only thing is, I have always been struck with the fact that so many people go about with their eyes shut, and do not see the chances which may be before them. They have no idea of doing anything beyond what they may have seen done before, and what they are told to do. They are frightened by originality lest it might be disastrous. I suppose I have been inclined to do things differently rather than the same as other people, and I have always struck while the iron was hot. That, I think, to put it very briefly, is the secret of any success which has attended my efforts."

N

Novel Notes.

By Jerome K. Jerome.

Illustrations by Hal Hurst and J. Gülich.

PART XI.

"LIGHTING HIS PIPE."

SAID Brown one evening, "There is but one vice, and that is selfishness. Selfishness is the seed of all sin."

Jephson was standing before the fire lighting his pipe. He puffed the tobacco into a glow, threw the match into the embers, and then said:

"And the seed of all virtue, also. Don't let us forget that."

"Sit down and get on with your work," said MacShaugnassy from the sofa where he lay at full length with his heels on a chair; "we're discussing the novel, Paradoxes not admitted during business hours."

Jephson, however, was in an argumentative mood. "Selfishness," he continued, "is merely another name for Will. Every deed, good or bad, that we do is prompted by selfishness. We are charitable to secure ourselves a good place in the next world, to make ourselves respected in this, to ease our own distress at the knowledge of suffering. One man is kind because it gives him pleasure to be kind, just as another is cruel because cruelty pleases him. A great man does his duty because to him the sense of duty done is a deeper delight than would be the ease resulting from avoidance of duty. The religious man is religious because he finds a joy in religion; the moral man moral because with his strong self-respect, viciousness would mean wretchedness. Self-sacrifice itself is only a subtle selfishness: we prefer the mental exaltation gained thereby to the sensual gratification which is the alternative reward. Man cannot be anything else but selfish. Selfishness is the law of all life. Each thing, from the farthest fixed star to the smallest insect crawling on the

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earth, fighting for itself according to its strength ; and brooding over all, the Eternal, working for *Himself:* that is the universe."

"Have some whiskey," said MacShaugnassy; "and don't be so complicatedly metaphysical. You make my head ache."

"If all action, good and bad, spring from selfishness," replied Brown ; "then there must be good selfishness and bad selfishness; and your bad selfishness is my plain selfishness, without any adjective, so we are back where we started. I say selfishness—bad selfishness—is the root of all evil, and there you are bound to agree with me."

"Not always," persisted Jephson ; "I've known selfishness—selfishness according to the ordinarily accepted meaning of the term—to be productive of good actions. I can give you an instance, if you like."

"Has it got a moral ? " asked MacShaugnassy, drowsily.

Jephson mused a moment. "Yes," he at length said ; "a very practical moral—and one very useful to young men."

"That's the sort of story we want," said the MacShaugnassy, raising himself into a sitting position. "You listen to this, Brown."

Jephson seated himself upon a chair, in his favourite attitude, with his elbows resting upon the back, and smoked for awhile in silence.

"There are three people in this story," he began ; "the wife, the wife's husband, and the other man. In most dramas of this type, it is the wife who is the chief character. In this case, the interesting person is the other man.

"The wife—I saw her once: she was the most beautiful woman I have ever seen, and the most wicked-looking ; which is saying a good deal for both statements. I remember, during a walking tour one year, coming across a lovely little cottage. It was the sweetest place imaginable. I need not describe it. It was the cottage one sees in pictures, and reads of in sentimental poetry. I was leaning over the neatly-cropped hedge, drinking in its beauty, when at one of the tiny casements I saw, looking out at me, a face. It stayed there only for a moment, but in that moment the cottage had become ugly, and I hurried away with a shudder.

"That woman's face reminded me of the incident. It was an angel's face, until the woman herself looked out of it: then you were struck by the strange incongruity between tenement and tenant.

"That at one time she had loved her husband, I have little doubt. Vicious women have few vices, and sordidness is not usually one of them. She had probably married him, borne towards him by one of those waves of passion upon which the souls of animal natures are continually rising and falling. On possession, however, had quickly followed satiety, and from satiety had grown the desire for a new sensation.

"They were living at Cairo at the period; her husband held an important official position there, and by virtue of this, and of her own beauty and tact, her house soon became the centre of the Anglo-Saxon society ever drifting in and out of the city. The women disliked her, and copied her. The men spoke slightingly of her to their wives, lightly of her to each other, and made idiots of themselves when they were alone with her. She laughed at them to their faces, and mimicked them behind their backs. Their friends said it was cleverly.

"SHE LAUGHED AT THEM."

"One year there arrived a young English engineer, who had come out to superintend some canal works. He brought with him satisfactory letters of recommendation, and was at once received by the European residents as a welcome addition to their social circle. He was not particularly good-looking, he was not remarkably charming, but he possessed the one thing that few women can resist in a man, and that is strength. The woman looked at the man, and the man looked back at the woman; and the drama began.

"Scandal flies swiftly through small communities. Before a month, their relationship was the chief topic of conversation throughout the quarter. In less than two, it reached the ears of the woman's husband,

"He was either an exceptionally mean or an exceptionally noble character, according to how one views the matter. He worshipped his wife—as men with big hearts and weak brains often do worship such women—with dog-like devotion. His only dread was lest the scandal should reach proportions that would compel him to take notice of it, and thus bring shame and suffering upon the woman he would have given his life to. That a man who saw her should love her seemed natural to him; that she should have grown tired of himself, a thing not to be wondered at. He was grateful to her for having once loved him, for a little while.

"As for 'the other man,' he proved somewhat of an enigma to the gossips. He attempted no secrecy; if anything, he rather paraded his subjugation—or his conquest, it was difficult to decide which term to apply. He rode and drove with her; visited her in public and in private (in such privacy as can be hoped for in a house filled with chattering servants, and watched by spying eyes); loaded her with expensive presents, which she wore openly, and papered his smoking den with her photographs. Yet he never allowed himself to appear in the least degree ridiculous; never allowed her to come between him and his work. A letter from her, he would lay aside unopened until he had finished what he evidently regarded as more important business. When boudoir and engine-shed became rivals, it was the boudoir that had to wait.

"The woman chafed under his self-control, which stung her like a lash, but clung to him the more abjectly.

"'Tell me you love me!' she would cry fiercely, stretching her white arms towards him.

"'I have told you so,' he would reply calmly, without moving.

"'I want to hear you tell it me again,' she would plead with a voice that trembled on a sob. 'Come close to me and tell it me again, again, again!'

"Then, as she lay with half-closed eyes, he would pour forth a flood of passionate words sufficient to satisfy even her thirsty ears, and afterwards, as the gates clanged behind him, would take up an engineering problem at the exact point at which half-an-hour before, on her entrance into the room, he had temporarily dismissed it.

"One day, a privileged friend put bluntly to him this question: 'Are you playing for love or vanity?'

"To which the man, after long pondering, gave this reply: 'Pon my soul, Jack, I couldn't tell you.'

"Now, when a man is in love with a woman who cannot make up her mind whether she loves him or not, we call the complication comedy; where it is the woman who is in earnest the result is generally tragedy.

"They continued to meet and to make love. They talked—as people in their position are prone to talk—of the beautiful life they would lead if it only were not for the thing that was; of the earthly paradise—or, maybe, 'earthy' would be the more suitable adjective—they would each create for the other, if only they had the right which they hadn't.

"SHE LAY WITH HALF-CLOSED EYES."

"In this work of imagination the man trusted chiefly to his literary faculties, which were considerable; the woman to her desires. Thus, his scenes possessed a grace and finish which hers lacked, but her pictures were the more vivid. Indeed, so realistic did she paint them, that to herself they seemed realities, waiting for her. Then she would rise to go towards them only to strike herself against the thought of the thing that stood between herself and them. At first the woman only hated the thing, but after a while there came an ugly look of hope into her eyes.

"The time drew near for the man to return to England. The canal was completed, and a day appointed for the letting in of the water. The man determined to make the event the occasion of a social gathering. He invited a large number of guests, among whom were the woman and her husband, to assist at the function. Afterwards the party were to picnic at a pleasant wooded spot some three-quarters of a mile from the first lock.

"The ceremony of flooding was to be performed by the woman,

her husband's position entitling her to this distinction. Between the river and the head of the cutting had been left a strong bank of earth, pierced some distance down by a hole, which hole was kept closed by means of a closely-fitting steel plate. The woman drew the lever releasing this plate, and the water rushed through and began to press against the lock gates. When it had attained a certain depth, the sluices were raised and the water poured down into the deep basin of the lock.

"It was an exceptionally deep lock. The party gathered round and watched the water slowly rising. The woman looked down, and shuddered; the man was standing by her side.

"'How deep it is,' she said.

"'Yes,' he replied, 'it holds thirty feet of water, when full.'

"The water crept up inch by inch.

"'Why don't you open the gates, and let it in quickly?' she asked.

"'It would not do for it to come in too quickly,' he explained to her; 'we shall half fill this lock, and then open the sluices at the other end, and so let the water pass through.'

"The woman looked at the smooth stone walls and at the iron-plated gates.

"'I wonder what a man would do,' she said, 'if he fell in, and there was no one near to help him.'

"The man laughed. 'I think he would stop there,' he answered. 'Come, the others are waiting for us.'

"He lingered a moment to give some final instructions to the workmen. 'You can follow on when you've made all right,' he said, 'and get something to eat. There's no need for more than one to stop.' Then they joined the rest of the party, and sauntered on, laughing and talking, to the picnic ground.

"After lunch the party broke up, as is the custom of picnic parties, and wandered away in groups and pairs. The man, whose duty as host had hitherto occupied all his attention, looked for the woman, but she was gone.

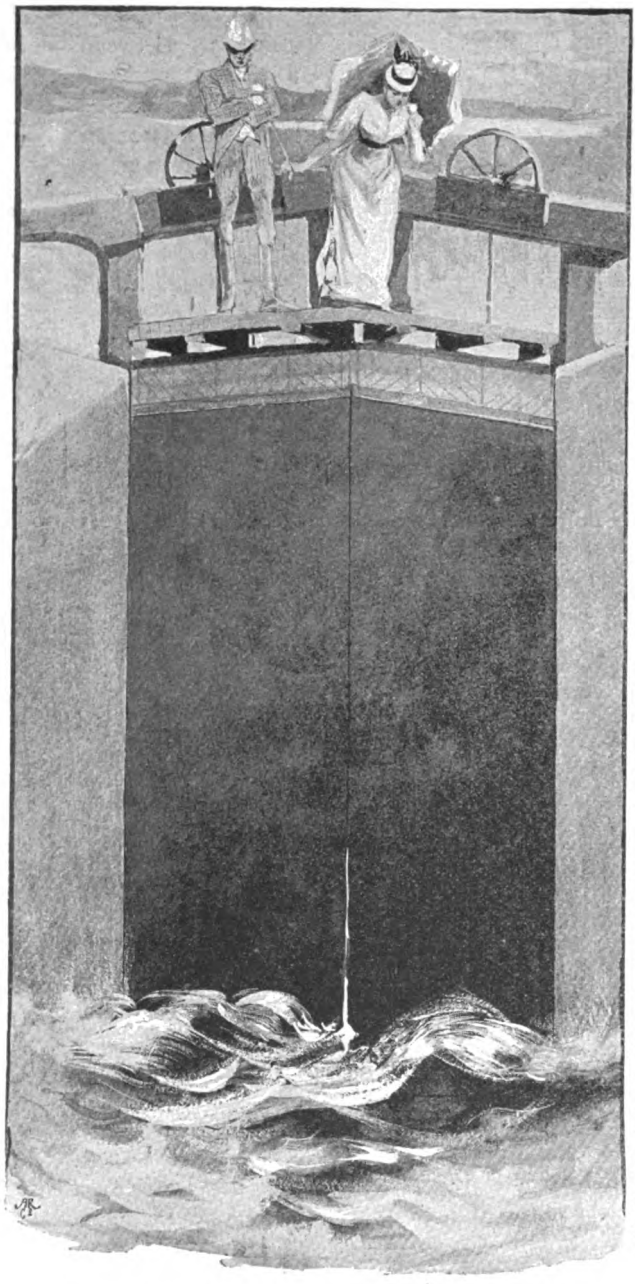
"A friend strolled by, the same that had put the question to him about love and vanity.

"'Have you quarrelled?' asked the friend.

"'No,' replied the man.

"'I fancied you had,' said the other. 'I met her just now walking with her husband, of all men in the world, and making herself quite agreeable to him.'

"The friend strolled on, and the man sat down on a fallen



"'IF A MAN FELL IN, AND THERE WAS NO ONE NEAR TO HELP HIM?'"

tree, and lighted a cigar. He smoked and thought, and the cigar burnt out, but he still sat thinking.

"After a while he heard a faint rustling of the branches behind him, and peering between the interlacing leaves that hid him, saw the crouching figure of the woman creeping through the wood.

"His lips were parted to call her name, when she turned her listening head in his direction, and his eyes fell full upon her face. Something about it, he could not have told what, struck him dumb, and the woman crept on.

"Gradually the nebulous thoughts floating through his brain began to solidify into a tangible idea, and the man un-

consciously started forward. After walking a few steps he broke into a run, for the idea had grown clearer. It continued to grow still clearer and clearer, and the man ran faster and faster, until at last he found himself racing madly towards the lock. As he approached it he looked round for the watchman who ought to have been there, but the man was gone from his post. He shouted, but if any answer was returned, it was drowned by the roar of the rushing water.

"HE BROKE INTO A RUN."

"He reached the edge and looked down. Fifteen feet below him was the reality of the dim vision that had come to him a mile back in the woods: the woman's husband swimming round and round like a rat in a pail.

"The river was flowing in and out of the lock at the same rate, so that the level of the water remained constant. The first thing the man did was to close the lower sluices and then open those in the upper gate to their fullest extent. The water inch by inch began to rise.

"'Can you hold out?' he cried.

"The drowning man turned to him a face already contorted by the agony of exhaustion, and answered with a feeble 'No.'

"He looked around for something to throw to the man. A plank had lain there in the morning, he remembered stumbling over it, and complaining of its having been left there; he cursed himself now for his care.

"A hut used by the navvies to keep their tools in stood about two hundred yards away; perhaps it had been taken there, perhaps there he might even find a rope.

"'Just one minute, old fellow!' he shouted down, 'and I'll be back.'

"But the old fellow did not hear him. The feeble struggles ceased. The face fell back upon the water, the eyes half closed as

if with weary indifference. There was no time for him to do more than kick off his riding boots and jump in and clutch the unconscious figure as it sank.

"Down there, in that walled-in trap, he fought a long fight with Death for the life that stood between him and the woman. He was not an expert swimmer, his clothes hampered him, he was already blown with his long race, the burden in his arms dragged him down, the water rose slowly enough to make his torture fit for Dantë's hell.

"HE FOUGHT A LONG FIGHT WITH DEATH."

"At first he could not understand why this was so, but in glancing down he saw to his horror that he had not properly closed the lower sluices; in each some eight or ten inches remained open, so that the stream was passing out nearly half as fast as it came in. It would be another five and twenty minutes before the water would be high enough for him to grasp the top.

"He noted where the line of wet had reached to on the smooth stone wall, then looked again after what he thought must be a lapse of ten minutes, and found it had risen half an inch, if that. Once or twice he shouted for help, but the effort taxed severely his already failing breath, and his voice only came back to him in a hundred echoes from his prison walls.

"Inch by inch the line of wet crept up, but the spending of his strength went on more swiftly. It seemed to him as if his inside were being gripped and torn slowly out: his whole body cried out to him to let it sink and lie in rest at the bottom.

"At length his unconscious burden opened its eyes and stared at him stupidly, then closed them again with a sigh; a minute later opened them once more and looked long and hard at him.

"'Let me go,' he said, 'we shall both drown. You can manage by yourself.'

"He made a feeble effort to release himself, but the other held him.

"'Keep still, you fool!' he hissed; 'you're going to get out of this with me, or I'm going down with you.'

"So the grim struggle went on in silence, till the man, looking up, saw the stone coping just a little way above his head, made one mad leap and caught it with his finger-tips, held on an instant, then fell back with a 'plump,' and sank; came up and made another dash, helped by the impetus of his rise, caught the coping firmly this time with the whole of his fingers, hung on till his eyes saw the grass, till they were both able to scramble out upon the bank and lie there, their breasts pressed close against the ground, and their hands clutching the earth, while the overflowing water swirled softly round them.

"CAUGHT IT WITH HIS FINGER-TIPS."

"After a while, they raised themselves and looked at one another.

"'Tiring work, that sort of thing,' said the other man, with a nod towards the lock.

"'Yes,' answered the husband, 'beastly awkward not being a good swimmer. How did you know I had fallen in? You met my wife, I suppose?'

"'Yes,' said the other man.

"The husband sat staring at a point in the horizon for some minutes. 'Do you know what I was wondering this morning?' said he.

"'No,' said the other man.

"'Whether I should kill you or not.'

"'They told me,' he continued, after a pause, 'a lot of silly gossip which I was cad enough to believe. I know now it wasn't true, because—well, if it had been, you would not have done what you have done.'

"He rose and came across. 'I beg your pardon,' he said, holding out his hand.

"'I beg yours,' said the other man, rising and taking it; 'do you mind giving me a hand with the sluices?'

"They set to work to put the lock right.

"'How did you manage to fall in?' asked the other man, who was raising one of the lower sluices, without looking round.

"The husband hesitated, as if he found the explanation somewhat difficult. 'Oh,' he answered carelessly, 'the wife and I were chaffing, and she said she'd often seen you jump it, and'—he laughed a rather forced laugh—'she promised me a—a kiss if I cleared it. It was a foolish thing to do.'

"'Yes, it was rather,' said the other man.

"A few days afterwards the man and woman met at a reception. He found her in a leafy corner of the garden talking to some friends. She advanced to meet him, holding out her hand. 'What can I say more than thank you,' she murmured in a low voice.

"STRUCK HIM ACROSS THE FACE"

"The others moved away leaving them alone. 'They tell me you risked your life to save his?' she said.

"'Yes,' he answered.

"She raised her eyes to his, then struck him across the face with her ungloved hand.

"'You damned fool!' she whispered.

"He seized her by her white arms, and forced her back behind the orange trees. 'Do you know why?' he said, speaking slowly and distinctly; 'because I feared that with him dead you would want me to marry you, and that, talked about as we have been, I might find it awkward to avoid doing so; because I feared that without him to stand between us you might prove an annoyance to me—perhaps come between me and the woman I love, the woman I am going back to. Now do you understand?'

"'Yes,' whispered the woman, and he left her.

"But there are only two people," concluded Jephson, "who do

not regard his saving of the husband's life as a highly noble and unselfish action, and they are the man himself and the woman."

We thanked Jephson for his story, and promised to profit by the moral, when discovered. Meanwhile, MacShaugnassy said that he knew a story dealing with the same theme, namely, the too close attachment of a woman to a strange man, which really had a moral, which moral was: don't have anything to do with inventions.

Brown, who had patented a safety gun, which he had never yet found a man plucky enough to let off, said it was a bad moral. We agreed to hear the particulars, and judge for ourselves.

"This story," commenced MacShaugnassy, "comes from Furtwangen, a small town in the Black Forest. There lived there a very wonderful old fellow named Nicholaus Geibel. His business was the making of mechanical toys, at which work he had acquired an almost European reputation. He made rabbits that would emerge from the heart of a cabbage, flop their ears, smooth their whiskers, and disappear again; cats that would wash their faces, and mew so naturally that dogs would mistake them for real cats, and fly at them; dolls, with phonographs concealed within them, that would raise their hats and say, 'Good morning; how do you do,' and some that would even sing a song.

"HE HAD CONTRIVED A MECHANICAL DONKEY."

"But he was something more than a mere mechanic; he was an artist. His work was with him a hobby, almost a passion. His shop was filled with all manner of strange things that never would, or could, be sold—things he had made for the pure love of making them. He had contrived a mechanical donkey that would trot for two hours by means of stored electricity, and trot, too, much faster than the live article, and with less need for exertion on the part of the driver; a bird that would shoot up into the air,

fly round and round in a circle, and drop to earth at the exact spot from where it started; a skeleton that, supported by an upright iron bar, would dance a hornpipe; a life-size lady doll that could play the fiddle; and a gentleman with a hollow inside who could smoke a pipe and drink more lager beer than any three average German students put together, which is saying much.

"Indeed, it was the belief of the town that old Geibel could make a man capable of doing everything that a respectable man need want to do. One day he made a man who did too much, and it came about in this way.

"Young Doctor Follen had a baby, and the baby had a birthday. Its first birthday put Doctor Follen's household into somewhat of a flurry, but on the occasion of its second birthday, Mrs. Doctor Follen gave a ball in honour of the event. Old Geibel and his daughter Olga were among the guests.

"During the afternoon of the next day some three or four of Olga's bosom friends, who had also been present at the ball, dropped in to have a chat about it. They naturally fell to discussing the men, and to criticising their dancing. Old Geibel was in the room, but he appeared to be absorbed in his newspaper, and the girls took no notice of him.

"'There seem to be fewer men who can dance at every ball you go to,' said one of the girls.

"'Yes, and don't the ones who can give themselves airs,' said another; 'they make quite a favour of asking you.'

"'And how stupidly they talk,' added a third. 'They always say exactly the same things: "How charming you are looking to-night." "Do you often go to Vienna? Oh, you should, it's delightful." "What a charming dress you have on." "What a warm day it has been." "Do you like Wagner?" I do wish they'd think of something new.'

"'Oh, I never mind how they talk,' said a fourth. 'If a man dances well he may be a fool for all I care.'

"'He generally is,' slipped in a thin girl, rather spitefully.

"'I go to a ball to dance,' continued the previous speaker, not noticing the interruption. 'All I ask of a partner is that he shall hold me firmly, take me round steadily, and not get tired before I do.'

"'A clockwork figure would be the thing for you,' said the girl who had interrupted.

"'Bravo!' cried one of the others, clapping her hands, 'what a capital idea!'

"'What's a capital idea?' they asked.

"'Why, a clockwork dancer, or, better still, one that would go by electricity and never run down.'

"The girls took up the idea with enthusiasm.

"'Oh, what a lovely partner he would make,' said one; 'he would never kick you, or tread on your toes.'

"'Or tear your dress,' said another.

"'Or get out of step.'

"'Or get giddy and lean on you.'

"'And he would never want to mop his face with his handkerchief. I do hate to see a man do that after every dance.'

"'And wouldn't want to spend the whole evening in the supper room.'

"'Why, with a phonograph inside him to grind out all the stock remarks, you would not be able to tell him from a real man,' said the girl who had first suggested the idea.

"'Oh, yes, you would,' said the thin girl, 'he would be so much nicer.'

"Old Geibel had laid down his paper, and was listening with both his ears. On one of the girls glancing in his direction, however, he hurriedly hid himself again behind it.

"After the girls were gone, he went into his workshop, where Olga heard him walking up and down, and every now and then chuckling to himself; and that night he talked to her a good deal about dancing and dancing men—asked what they usually said and did—what dances were most popular—what steps were gone through, with many other questions bearing on the subject.

OLGA SHOWING HIM WHAT STEPS WERE GONE THROUGH.

"Then for a couple of weeks he kept much to his factory, and was very thoughtful and busy, though prone at unexpected moments to break into a quiet low laugh, as if enjoying a joke that nobody else knew of.

"A month later another ball took place in Furtwangen. On this occasion it was given by old Wenzel, the wealthy timber merchant, to celebrate his niece's betrothal, and Geibel and his daughter were again among the invited.

"When the hour arrived to set out, Olga sought her father. Not finding him in the house, she tapped at the door of his workshop. He appeared in his shirt-sleeves, looking hot but radiant.

"'Don't wait for me,' he said, 'you go on, I'll follow you. I've got something to finish.'

"As she turned to obey he called after her, 'Tell them I'm going to bring a young man with me—such a nice young man, and an excellent dancer. All the girls will like him.' Then he laughed and closed the door.

"Her father generally kept his doings secret from everybody, but she had a pretty shrewd suspicion of what he had been planning, and so, to a certain extent, was able to prepare the guests for what was coming. Anticipation ran high, and the arrival of the famous mechanist was eagerly awaited.

"At length the sound of wheels was heard outside, followed by a great commotion in the passage, and old Wenzel himself, his jolly face red with excitement and suppressed laughter, burst into the room and announced in stentorian tones:

"'Herr Geibel—and a friend.'

"Herr Geibel and his 'friend' entered, greeted with shouts of laughter and applause, and advanced to the centre of the room.

"'Allow me, ladies and gentlemen,' said Herr Geibel, 'to introduce you to my friend, Lieutenant Fritz. Fritz, my dear fellow, bow to the ladies and gentlemen.'

"Geibel placed his hand encouragingly on Fritz's shoulder, and the lieutenant bowed low, accompanying the action with a harsh clicking noise in his throat, unpleasantly suggestive of a death rattle. But that was only a detail.

"'He walks a little stiffly' (old Geibel took his arm and walked him forward a few steps. He certainly did walk stiffly), 'but then, walking is not his forte. He is essentially a dancing man. I have only been able to teach him the waltz as yet, but at that he is faultless. Come, which of you ladies may I introduce him to as a partner. He keeps perfect time; he never gets tired; he won't kick you or tread on your dress; he will hold you as firmly as you like, and go as quickly or as slowly as you please; he never gets giddy; and he is full of conversation. Come, speak up for yourself, my boy.'

"The old gentleman twisted one of the buttons at the back of his coat, and immediately Fritz opened his mouth, and in thin tones that appeared to proceed from the back of his head, remarked suddenly, 'May I have the pleasure?' and then shut his mouth again with a snap.

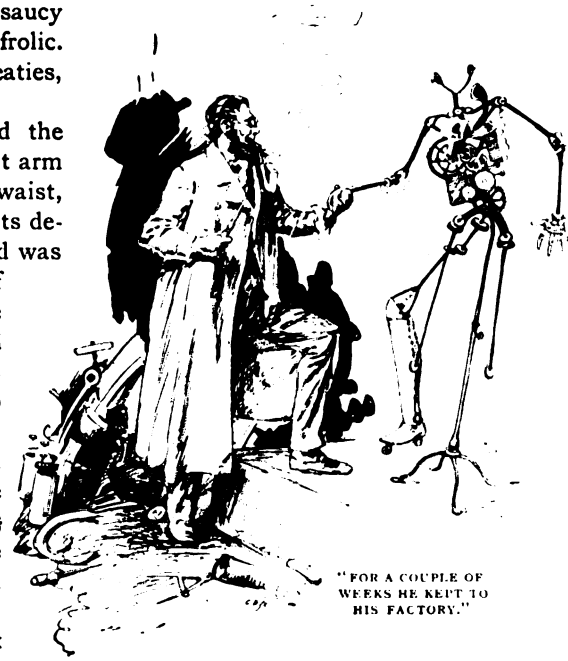
"That Lieutenant Fritz had made a strong impression on the company was undoubted, yet none of the girls seemed inclined to dance with him. They looked askance at his waxen face, with its staring eyes and fixed smile, and shuddered. At last old Geibel came to the girl who had conceived the idea.

"'It is your own suggestion, carried out to the letter,' said Geibel, 'an electric dancer. You owe it to the gentleman to give him a trial.'

"She was a bright, saucy little girl, fond of a frolic. Her host added his entreaties, and she consented.

"Herr Geibel fixed the figure to her. Its right arm was screwed round her waist, and held her firmly; its delicately-jointed left hand was made to fasten itself upon her right. The old toymaker showed her how to regulate its speed, and how to stop it, and release herself.

"'It will take you round in a complete circle,' he explained; 'be careful that no one knocks against you, and alters its course.'



"FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS HE KEPT TO HIS FACTORY."

"The music struck up. Old Geibel put the current in motion, and Annette and her strange partner began to dance.

"For a while everyone stood watching them. The figure performed its purpose admirably. Keeping perfect time and step, and holding its little partner tight clasped in an unyielding embrace, it revolved steadily, pouring forth at the same time a constant flow of squeaky conversation, broken by brief intervals of grinding silence.

"'How charming you are looking to-night,' it remarked in its thin, far-away voice. 'What a lovely day it has been. Do you

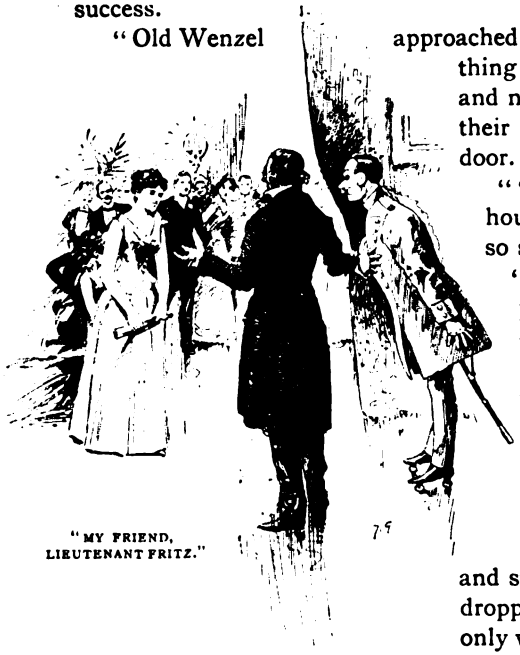
like dancing? How well our steps agree. You will give me another, won't you? Oh, don't be so cruel. What a charming gown you have on. Isn't waltzing delightful? I could go on dancing for ever—with you. Have you had supper?'

"As she grew more familiar with the uncanny creature, the girl's nervousness wore off, and she entered into the fun of the thing.

"'Oh, he's just lovely,' she cried, laughing, 'I could go on dancing with him all my life.'

"Couple after couple now joined them, and soon all the dancers in the room were whirling round behind them. Nicholaus Geibel stood looking on, beaming with childish delight at his success.

"Old Wenzel approached him, and whispered something in his ear. Geibel laughed and nodded, and the two worked their way quietly towards the door.



"MY FRIEND, LIEUTENANT FRITZ."

"'This is the young people's house to-night,' said Wenzel, so soon as they were outside; 'you and I will have a quiet pipe and a glass of hock, over in the counting-house.'

"Meanwhile the dancing grew more fast and furious. Little Annette loosened the screw regulating her partner's rate of progress, and the figure flew round with her swifter and swifter. Couple after couple dropped out exhausted, but they only went the faster, till at length they remained dancing alone.

"Madder and madder became the waltz. The music lagged behind: the musicians, unable to keep pace, ceased, and sat staring. The younger guests applauded, but the older faces began to grow anxious.

"'Hadn't you better stop, dear,' said one of the women, 'you'll make yourself so tired.'

"But Annette did not answer.

"'I believe she's fainted,' cried out a girl who had caught sight of her face as it was swept by.

"One of the men sprang forward and clutched at the figure, but its impetus threw him down on to the floor, where its steel-cased feet laid bare his cheek. The thing evidently did not intend to part with its prize easily.

"Had anyone retained a cool head, the figure, one cannot help thinking, might easily have been stopped. Two or three men acting in concert might have lifted it bodily off the floor, or have jammed it into a corner. But few human heads are capable of remaining cool under excitement. Those who are not present think how stupid must have been those who were; those who are reflect afterwards how simple it would have been to do this, that, or the other, if only they had thought of it at the time.

"'The women grew hysterical. The men shouted contradictory directions to one another. Two of them made a bungling rush at the figure, which had the result of forcing it out of its orbit in the centre of the room, and sending it crashing against the walls and furniture. A stream of blood showed itself down the girl's white frock, and followed her along the floor. The affair was becoming horrible. The women rushed screaming from the room. The men followed them.

"One sensible suggestion was made: 'Find Geibel—fetch Geibel.'

"No one had noticed him leave the room, no one knew where he was. A party went in search of him. The others, too unnerved to go back into the ball-room, crowded outside the door and listened. They could hear the steady whir of the wheels upon the polished floor as the thing spun round and round; the dull thud as every now and again it dashed itself and its burden against some opposing object and ricocheted off in a new direction.

"And everlastingly it talked in that thin ghostly voice, repeating over and over the same formula: 'How charming you are looking to-night. What a lovely day it has been. Oh, don't be so cruel. I could go on dancing for ever—with you. Have you had supper?'

"Of course they sought for Geibel everywhere but where he was. They looked in every room in the house, then they rushed off in a body to his own place, and spent precious minutes in waking up his deaf old housekeeper. At last it occurred to one of the party that Wenzel was missing also, and then the idea of the

counting-house across the yard presented itself to them, and there they found him.

"He rose up, very pale, and followed them; and he and old Wenzel forced their way through the crowd of guests gathered outside, and entered the room, and locked the door behind them.

"From within there came the muffled sound of low voices and quick steps, followed by a confused scuffling noise, then silence, then the low voices again.

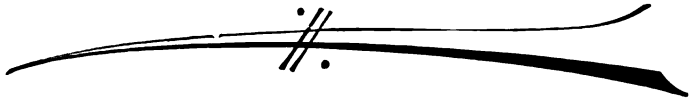
"After a time the door opened, and those near it pressed forward to enter, but old Wenzel's broad shoulders barred the way.

"'I want you—and you, Bekler,' he said, addressing a couple of the elder men. His voice was calm, but his face was deadly white. 'The rest of you, please go—get the women away as quickly as you can.'

"From that day old Nicholaus Geibel confined himself to the making of mechanical rabbits and cats that mewed and washed their faces."

We agreed that the moral of MacShaugnassy's story was a good one.

(To be continued.)



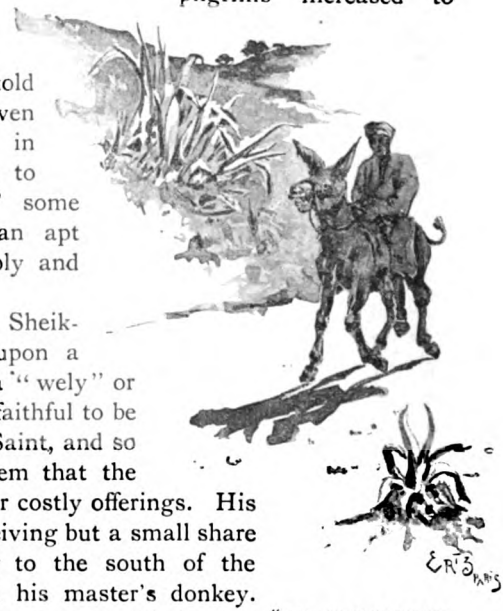
"Then longe folk to go on pilgrimages,
And palmers for to seeke strange strands
To ferne hallows couth in sundry lands."

IN the good old times, when a man wanted a little change from the bosom of his family—in those days a somewhat restricted bosom—he went on a crusade, or a pilgrimage.

What if he did spend his time and substance on that which, from a worldly standpoint, profited not—absenting himself from home and friends for periods of time lengthy enough to afford a modern wife good grounds for a divorce—was it not all meritorious? Heaven, he fondly believed, would more than pay his travelling expenses by a large cheque to his credit on the next world, whilst he had the pleasure of the journey in this: an ingenious method of seeing something of both! And so he donned his pilgrim weeds, and his "cockle hat and shoon"—as all good chroniclers tell us—and hied him off to Canterbury or Cologne, Rome, Jerusalem, or Timbuctoo. Mrs. Pilgrim was left at home to play "patience," and to keep the house and bairns. She was generally a long-suffering creature, but sometimes she *did* get into mischief. She could not *always* spin yarn, so she occasionally varied her task by weaving nets—traps for the unwary who was *not* a pilgrim.

But if she got into mischief, she paid the penalty; my lord invariably cut off her head with his scimitar when he returned home—if she waited for that—and there was an end of the matter. There was no Divorce Court in the good old days, and a woman's head did not count for much. But these slight casualties never diminished the ardour of the pilgrim spirit: the pilgrim increased

and multiplied, and sought new shrines as well as new wives. To slightly vary the words of the poet, "*Shrine* after *shrine* his rising raptures fill. But still he sighs—for *shrines* are wanting still." The law of supply and demand, however, worked as surely then as now; and as pilgrims increased to venerate, objects increased to be venerated. There is a good story told by the Arabs—it was given by Dr. Samuel Jessup in one of his contributions to "Picturesque Palestine" some years ago—and it is an apt illustration of this supply and demand principle.



"RAN AWAY WITH HIS MASTER'S DONKEY."

There was a certain Sheik-Mohammed who, once upon a time, was the keeper of a "wely" or shrine, supposed by the faithful to be the tomb of an eminent Saint, and so largely frequented by them that the Sheik grew rich from their costly offerings. His servant Ali, however, receiving but a small share of the profits, ran away to the south of the Jordan, taking with him his master's donkey. The animal died on the way, and Ali, having covered his body with a heap of stones, sat down in despair. A passer-by enquired the cause of his sorrow, and Ali replied that he had just found the tomb of an eminent Saint; the man kissed the stones, gave Ali a present, and passed on his way.

The news of the holy shrine spread throughout the land, and pilgrims thronged to visit it: Ali became rich, built a fine "Kubbeh" (Dome), and was envied by all the Sheiks.

Mohammed, hearing of the new shrine, and finding his own eclipsed by it, made a pilgrimage to it himself, in hopes of finding out the source of its great repute. Finding Ali in charge, he asked, in a whisper, if he would tell him the name of the Saint whose tomb he kept charge of. "I will," replied Ali, "on condition that you tell me the name of your Saint." Mohammed consented, and Ali then whispered, "God alone is great! This is the tomb of the donkey I stole from you."

"Mashallah!" cried Mohammed, "and my 'wely' is the

tomb of that donkey's father!" Methinks Palestine has not a monopoly of the long-eared and long-suffering race, either living or dead!

But we have changed all that; as we have a good many other things. Saints and their shrines are out of fashion. "It is an age of seeing, not believing," we say complacently; and we laugh with superior wisdom at the follies of our forefathers, and the relics they went so far to adore—relics which, like the fabled frog, by trying to swell themselves to greater and still greater dimensions, ended in growing a little too extensive for their ultimate good. Saints, like sinners, can only have two legs apiece, we all know; but the saints of our ancestors, if their relics spoke truly, must have been saintly centipedes: of making new limbs there was no end, and, as their numbers increased, reverence waned, till hey! —the bubble of credulity burst at last, as did the frog!

But if the heavenly profitability was cut off by this collapse of superstition, or eclipse of faith—call it which you will—the habit of pleasurable moving remained; stronger by the force of repeated custom throughout all past times: we keep the shell, but we cunningly substitute a new kernel in the place of the exploded core of heretofore.

We go a pilgrimage still, but your modern spirit is now the pilgrim of Health, Pleasure, Science, Art, and such-like—all high-sounding names to conjure by; and the world, that old time-server, ever seeking to accommodate itself to the new ways of its inhabitants, is ever supplying us with a new Spa, a new "old master," or masterpiece, a newly dug-up ruin, or hieroglyph, or Dark Continent, or—for even the humblest "tripper" is not forgotten—a new Mudport-on-Sea.

The shrines of our forefathers' worship have crept back into favour by hiding themselves in the voluminous draperies of History or Art. Our appetite for shows is omnivorous, and we don't object to a shrine if it has a Gothic moulding sufficiently "cute," or a Byzantine roof, or some other attraction—are we not pilgrims of *Art?*—though if called upon to define our roof or moulding many of us might be considerably nonplussed, taking refuge in describing one as a "thing with a round top," and the other as "a sort of stone trimming, don't you know."

I remember once reading a child's tale—I have forgotten where, for it was many years ago—but the drift of the story was too good to forget. It was about a small pig who lived with his mother in a stye which possessed but a limited front yard. Piggy had the

"PILGRIMS OF ART."

pilgrim spirit, and sighed to escape to pastures new, to see what lay beyond his little wall. One day his chance came—he escaped somehow, and made a pilgrimage round the farmyard, where the strange things he saw either frightened him dreadfully, or were utterly unintelligible to his piggish mind. He was so frightened by the roaring of a bull that he fled with great precipitation home, where he gave a glowing account of his travels to his mother.

"Yes," he said, "I have seen the world. It is square, and it has a wall all round it, to keep the pigs from falling off, of course. I saw some queer white pigs, with only two legs—think of that! They said 'Quack, quack'—that is what they say in the world, you know, but, of course, *you* don't understand. Then I saw a great red pig, who cried, 'Mou-e-e-e!' There is but *one* such pig in the world, and *I* have seen it. I am content to live quietly now, for I have seen the whole world!"

Who has not seen that smug satisfaction of small souls as reflected by piggy?

There is a great deal in *looking* wise even if you don't feel so. Talk always of your "dones," and leave out the "undones."

Most of us have heard of the apocryphal American who "does Europe" in a fortnight! I cannot say that I have actually met that gentleman, but I have met pilgrims, both English and American, who will tell you grandly that they have "done"—say Rome, in two, nay in one day! All the antiquities, of *course*, and the Museums; and then comes a string of names of churches, and galleries, until you gasp for breath! You go away and lean against something to recover your breath, and your gravity, but the pilgrimage is an accomplished fact. They have a right to stick to the cockle-shell in their cap, so to speak, and go home saying, "Oh, yes! We have done Rome, or Italy, or Egypt, *thoroughly;* missed nothing!"

If one could take an impression of one of these pilgrim's brains by "Kodak," one would get some queer results in chaos, rather like the game of family post—the Raphael frescoes transferring themselves to Karnak, and the Sphinx hiding in the Catacombs, whilst pictures, statuary, and shrines of "cult" executed a Bacchanalian dance on a gigantic scale all round.

But results do not alter facts; and in these busy days people are generally content to *see* your tree of knowledge; they have no time to climb its branches to look for the fruit of wisdom!

We have changed our pilgrim weeds for an ulster of the latest cut, and our Missal for a "Murray" or "Baedeker," but are we really so much wiser than our forefathers?

Alas! we have but changed the object, and human nature, gullible ever, sees no reason why it should not flock in thousands to drop a visiting card into the tomb (so called) of "Juliet" at Verona, with as fond credulity as their fathers, when they deposited their candle at the tomb of some miracle-working saint; with this difference, however—that the latter was deposited for the glory and praise of the saint, and the former of the sinner *himself*. Who could say, after that, that he had not seen it!

I happened, when there, to make some irreverent remarks about that tomb. I had walked out to see it on a hot afternoon, and I found it inconveniently far. One is accustomed to have these places "grouped," and I was displeased with *Juliet* for not being buried nearer home—it was an oversight—but perhaps it had been arranged for the benefit of the carriage-drivers. *Juliet* was public-spirited, and thought of all classes, and their interests. I did not think of all these extenuating circumstances then, however, and so I said unbelieving things about her tomb.

The *custode* was deeply pained, as an orthodox *custode* ought to be. He remonstrated with me first, and then he pointed to the wall. "*Ecco, Signor! è scritto, è scritto è verissimo!*"

"ECCO, SIGNOR!"

And there indeed it was written, in good set terms, and in two or three languages, for the benefit of all non-literary or unbelieving pilgrims.

I have often thought since how many people there are, like my friend the *custode*, to whom the magic "it is written" is sufficient ground for their faith, without further consideration as to *when* and *how*.

Some time ago a friend of mine encountered a portly Western American tourist at Kenilworth. He came in a hurry, and asked to be shown the part "wrote up" by Scott. He gazed for a few minutes, and then departed as quickly as he came. To him Kenilworth was merely a place "wrote up" by Scott, and no doubt he had Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon to see that same afternoon, before going on to Liverpool.

There are pilgrims who certainly carry a feeling of duty into all things. Wherever they go they mean work!

This quality pre-eminently distinguishes the English-speaking world, and it always fills our Continental, or Oriental, neighbours with lazy wonder. "Oh, these Englishwomen! they have legs and stomachs of bronze!" I once heard an Italian say.

We are inclined to overdo it. I think an occasional rest-day is as necessary to the tired brain as the photographer's dark room is to the development of the negative impression—without it the brain would, indeed, record a "*negative impression*."

But I am straying from *Juliet's* tomb, and the subject of unlimited faith. Only make a thing possible, and, *if there is an undercurrent of desire to believe it*, the large majority will swallow almost anything with what theologians call "simple faith." The "if" is an important one—the key to the situation. We believe readily when it is agreeable to do so, and all pilgrims have ever sought to heighten the attractions of the objects of their interest. It adds to their own enjoyment of them, and, after all, is it not a

"LURED MEN TO DESTRUCTION."

reflex compliment to ourselves? If "there is but *one* such pig in the world," have not *I* seen it?

Have you ever noticed the effect of the expression, "They say?" If we say "Tom," or "Dick," or "Harry," says "so and so," "Tom" is no better authority than "Dick," nor are both together much better than "Harry." But if we say, indefinitely, "*They* say" "so and so," there is a mysterious potency in the unknown quantity which leads, if not to universal belief, at least to universal transmission.

"Yes, it is an interesting spot. They say that a princess is buried here who was laid under a potent spell by a mighty wizard, long, long ago," etc.; or "They tell of a beauteous maiden who sat on this rock, in the far past, and sang, and thus lured men to destruction," etc.

He or she is always swallowed up by the mists of obscurity—oh, ye mists of obscurity, ye have much to answer for!

We do not care to dispute with "They" his superior information—even if we could find him; for he seems to reside permanently in the aforesaid mists himself; only issuing forth, like a valiant knight, to rescue the fair maidens—Fact, or Fiction—from the jaws of the dragon Oblivion! What he *is*, we leave to the learned, who could no doubt dispose of him suitably in connection with the highly convenient solar myths, as a Potent Rescuing Power! As for us, we meddle not with the mists: we rather like the delicious glow of their luminous dimness, which glorifies the past if it clouds it; and which softens off the hardness of our prosaic modern life, as a summer haze our English landscape.

We are delighted to get hold of an ancient legend,

whether of headless horseman or housekeeper, pixie or wizard. Even in that "happy hunting ground" of the Modern Spirit, the United States of America, the old legends linger still, if but faintly. The soil of a new country does not grow sentiment of this sort readily, but the plant is indigenous to the human heart; and its fair flowers have been gathered and wreathed around their pages by many an essayist and poet. We cannot do without the element of mystery in our life, however we may represent it. It is part of the spirit within us, and we find it in everything around us. It is the veil of "Isis" which science, her worshipper, is ever trying to lift, but cannot. The muse of Inspiration pours forth her melodious voice, like the nightingale, in the darkness and the shady covert. We listen to her song with entranced ears; a few whose spirits are "finely touched," try to repeat it; but who has ever seen her; the soul that animates, the spirit that inspires! Our life itself is a mystery — the Past and Future—are they not the wings of the Spirit of Time which are brooding over our Present? When they are lifted—when the mighty pinions are outspread for flight—*then* the shadows will flee for ever, for the great Daybreak of Eternity will have begun!

SCIENCE LIFTING THE VEIL OF ISIS.

Without the spirit of mystery, the mother of enquiry—of romance, the days of pilgrimage would be ended. If it is a mere matter of rest, and of oiling the wheels of the machine for a fresh grind, Mudport-on-Sea will do well enough; but Mudport-on-Sea can never satisfy the hunger of the curious soul for the beautiful; the marvellous; all that is in itself lovely, or that has lived in the past, and caught a brighter

glow from its rainbow reflections. One spot of ground may content the naturalist, or the Buddhist sage, for one can find a world of wondrous thought in the smallest leaf—a microcosm in a dew-drop; and the other can send his soul off on aerial pilgrimages, though his body may be in chains! But we are not all either natural or transcendental philosophers; our appetite requires not one leaf, but many, for our powers of assimilation are not great enough to draw spiritual sustenance from one alone; and so, like the caterpillar, when we have finished our leaf, we crawl to another.

"But this spirit of curiosity, or unrest, is all owing to lack of self-culture," cry some. Perhaps it is—some of it. No doubt the cocoon stage of rest and self-development is higher, and nearer to the ultimate perfection—the winged creature which soars above where others crawl—but until we are fit to be cocoons, and evolve butterflies, we must be content with our caterpillar instincts.

People speak scornfully of "mere curiosity," but it is only worthless when it bears no fruit. Curiosity, in itself, is a healthy, natural instinct, which we see to perfection in the small child. Toddie's speech in "Helen's Babies," "Want to shee wheels go wound," is the pilgrim spirit epitomised. We hear of the watch, and we want to see it; we see it, and then we want to hold it; we hear it tick, and we want to open it; and then we would like to "shee wheels go wound" constantly, and if we cannot, we kick at the prohibition!

Curiosity may be a worthless element in life when idle, but when otherwise, is it not the mainspring of the watch? Think of the manifold results of "mere curiosity," when rightly persevered in! But then we change the name—it becomes insight—research—it becomes a power which can climb the dizziest height, and dive the deepest depths, to bring to us their treasures—the star—the pearl!

A College Idyl.

By S. Gordon.

Illustrations by A. H. Fisher.

NIGHT it was—nay, nearer morning,
Snores and nightmares whisked about,
And the pallid moon gave warning
That her lamp was nearly out.
Twain we sat, and ruminated
On the world, its joys and ills,
What we loved, and what we hated,
Woman, wine—exams and bills.

Often, too, with short-lived splendour,
Flashed the ready epigram,
Thoughts we uttered, soft and tender,
Ending in a smothered "———";
All the truths and lies of ages
Compassed we in one short breath,
Flouted whims of priests and sages,
Lightly toyed with life and death.

Men and manners,
saints and sinners,
All and more we touched upon,
How the worst were ever winners,
For *we* yet had never won;
And we cursed at superstition,
Villain smiles, and sects, and cants,
Hurled to ruin and perdition
All the tribe of sycophants—

Queried, thinking of cold
faces,
Colder hearts of living stone,
Why our lot within such
places,
Why upon such days
was thrown;
In our years' maturing
crescent
Spied we how our fate was
fraught,
Spanned the future and the present
With the flimsy bridge of thought.

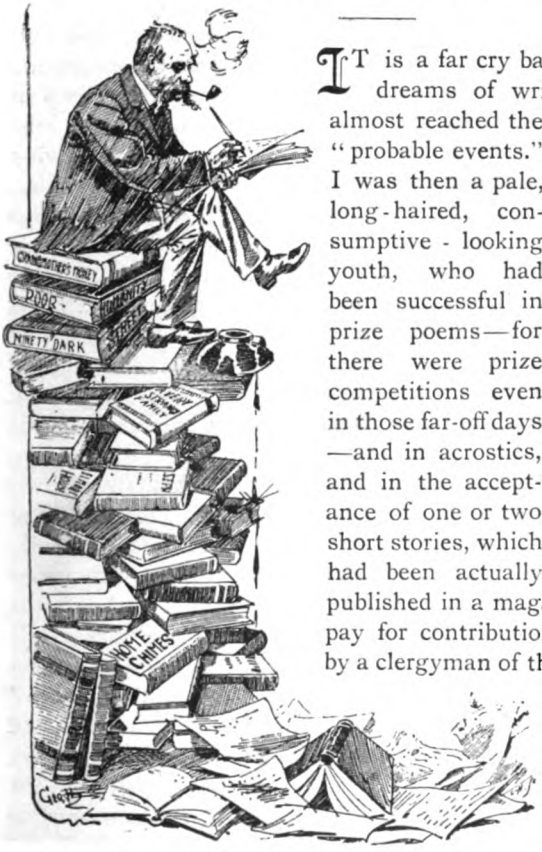
So the morn came, pale and haggard,
Lighting up our sunken eyes,
And we rose and thither staggered
Whence we would but slowly rise;
Plain our footsteps, weak and frisky,
Told their moral—speak who can—
Midnight words and midnight whiskey
Play the devil with a man!

(FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MESSRS. ELLIOTT AND FRY.)

My First Book.

By F. W. Robinson.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.



IT is a far cry back to 1853, when dreams of writing a book had almost reached the boundary line of "probable events." I was then a pale, long-haired, consumptive-looking youth, who had been successful in prize poems—for there were prize competitions even in those far-off days—and in acrostics, and in the acceptance of one or two short stories, which had been actually published in a magazine that did not pay for contributions (it was edited by a clergyman of the Church of England, too, and the chaplain to a real Duke), and which magazine has gone the way of many magazines, and is now as extinct as the Dodo. It was in the year 1853, or a month or two earlier, that I wrote my first novel—which, upon a moderate computation, I think, would make four or five good-sized library volumes, but I have never attempted to "scale" the manuscript. It is in my possession still, although I have not seen it for many weary years. It is buried with a heap

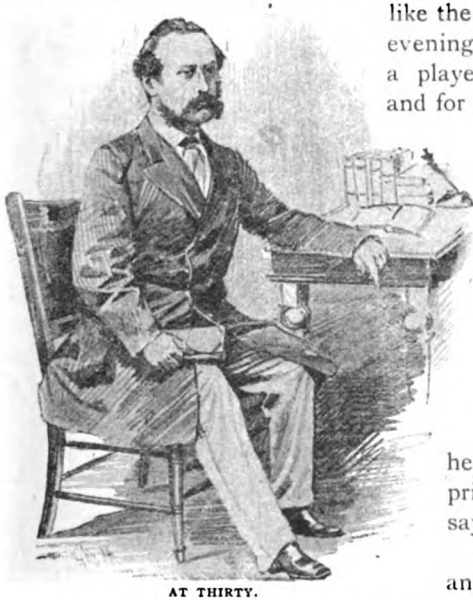
AT TWENTY.

more rubbish in a respectable old oak chest, the key of which is even lost to me. And yet that MS. was the turning-point of my small literary career. And it is the history of that manuscript which leads up to the publication of my first novel; my first step, though I did not know it, and hence it is part and parcel of the history of my first book—a link in the chain.

ELMORE HOUSE.

When that manuscript was completed, it was read aloud, night after night, to an admiring audience of family members, and pronounced as fit for publication as anything of Dickens or Thackeray or Bulwer, who were then in the full swing of their mighty capacities. Alas! I was a better judge than my partial and amiable critics. I had very grave doubts—"qualms," I think they are called—and I had read that it was uphill work to get a book published, and swagger through the world as a real live being who had actually written a novel. There was a faint hope, that was all; and so, with my MS. under my arm, I strolled into the palatial premises of Messrs. Hurst and Blackett ("successors to Henry Colburn" they proudly designated themselves at that period), laid my heavy parcel on the counter, and waited, with fear and trembling, for someone to emerge from the galleries of books and rows of desks beyond, and enquire the nature of my business. And here ensued my first surprise—quite a dramatic coincidence—for the tall, spare, middle-aged gentleman who advanced from the shadows towards the counter, proved, to my intense astonishment, to be a constant

chess antagonist of mine at Kling's Chess Rooms, round the corner, in New Oxford Street—rooms which have disappeared long ago, along with Horwitz, Harrwitz, Loewenthal, Williams, and other great chess lights of those far-away times, who were to be seen there, night after night, prepared for all comers. Kling's was a great chess house, and I was a chess enthusiast, as well as a youth who wanted to get into print. Failing literature, I had made up my mind to become a chess champion, if possible, although I knew already, by quiet observation of my antagonists, that in that way madness lay, sheer uncontrollable, raging madness—for me at any rate. And the grave, middle-aged gentleman behind the counter of 13, Great Marlborough Street, proved to be the cashier of the firm, and used—being chess-mad like the rest of us—to spend his evenings at "Kling's." He was a player of my own strength, and for twelve months or so had I skirmished with him over the chessboard, and fought innumerable battles with him. He had never spoken of his occupation, or I of my restless ambitions—chess players never go far beyond the chequered board.



AT THIRTY.

"Hallo, Robinson!" he exclaimed, in his surprise, "you don't mean to say that you ——"

And then he stopped and regarded my youthful appearance very critically.

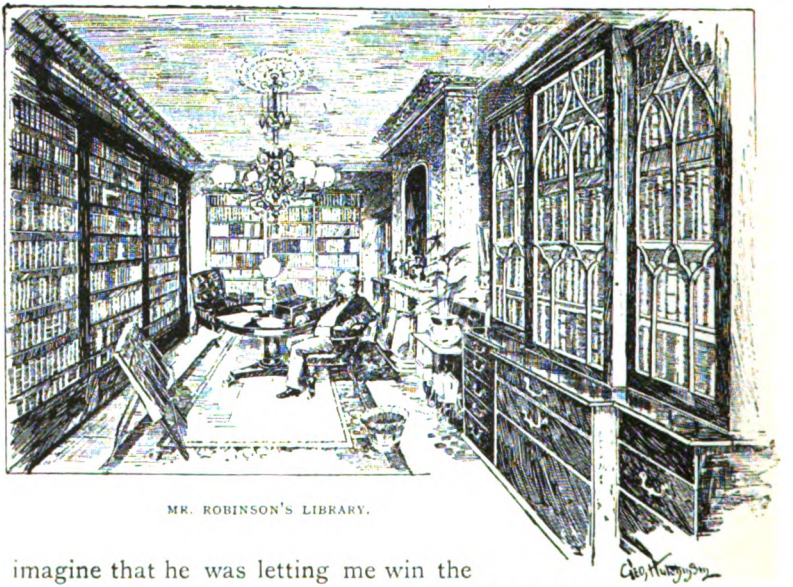
"Yes, Mr. Kenny—it's a novel," I said, modestly; "my first."

"There's plenty of it," he remarked, drily. "I'll send it upstairs at once. And I'll wish you luck too; but," he added, kindly, preparing to soften the shock of a future refusal, "we have plenty of these come in—about seven a day—and most of them go back to their writers again."

"Ye-es, I suppose so," I answered, with a sigh.

For awhile, however, I regarded the meeting as a happy

augury—a lucky coincidence. I even had the vain, hopeless notion that Mr. Kenny might put in a good word for me, ask for special consideration, out of that kindly feeling which we had for each other, and which chess antagonists have invariably for each other, I am inclined to believe. But though we met three or four times a week, from that day forth not one word concerning the fate of my manuscript escaped the lips of Mr. Kenny. It is probable the incident had passed from his memory; he had nothing to do with the novel department itself, and the delivery of MSS. was a very common everyday proceeding to him. I was too bashful, perhaps too proud, an individual to ask any questions of him; but every evening that I encountered him I used to wonder "if he had heard anything," if any news of the book's fate had reached him, directly or indirectly; occasionally even, as time went on, I was disposed to

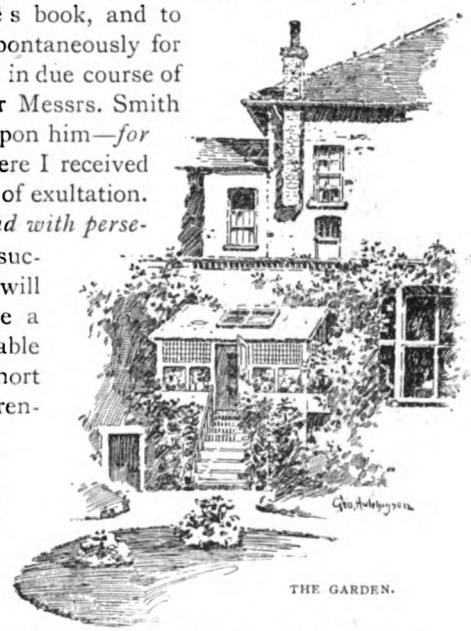


MR. ROBINSON'S LIBRARY.

imagine that he was letting me win the game out of kindness—for he was a gentle, kindly soul always—in order to soften the shock of a disappointment which he knew perfectly well was on its way towards me.

Some months afterwards, the fateful letter came to me from the firm, regretting their inability to make use of the MS., and expressing many thanks for a perusal of the same—a polite, concise, all-round kind of epistle, which a publisher is compelled to

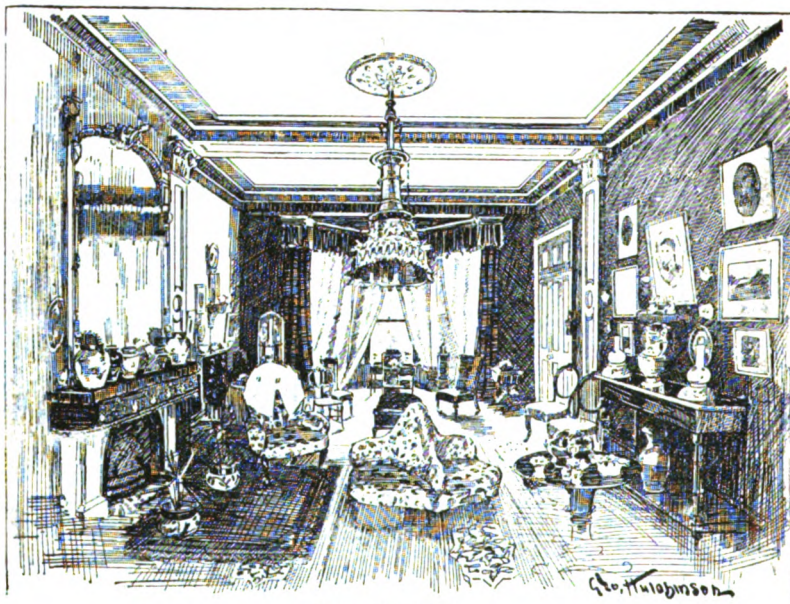
keep in stock, and to send out when rejected literature pours forth like a waterfall from the dusky caverns of a publishing house in a large way of business. It was all over, then—I had failed! From that hour I would turn chess player, and soften my brain in a quest for silver cups or champion amateur stakes. I could play chess better than I could write fiction, I was sure. Still, after some days of dead despair, I sent the MS. once more on its travels—this time to Smith and Elder's, whose reader, Mr. Williams, had leapt into singular prominence since his favourable judgment of Charlotte Brontë's book, and to whom most MSS. flowed spontaneously for many years afterwards. And in due course of time, Mr. Williams, acting for Messrs. Smith and Elder, asked me to call upon him—*for the MS.!*—at Cornhill, and there I received my first advice, my first thrill of exultation. "Presently, and probably, *and with perseverance*," he said, "you will succeed in literature, and if you will remember now, that to write a good novel is a very considerable achievement. Years of short story-writing is the best apprenticeship for you. Write and re-write, and spare no pains." I thanked him, and I went home with tears in my eyes of gratitude and consolation, though my big story had been declined with thanks. But I did not write again. I put away my MS., and went on for six or eight hours a day at chess for many idle months before I was in the vein for composition, and then, with a sudden dash, I began "The House of Elmore." It was half finished when another strange incident in its little way occurred. I received one morning a letter from Lascelles Wraxall (afterwards Sir Lascelles Wraxall, Bart., as the reader may be probably aware), informing me that he was one of the readers for Messrs. Hurst and Blackett, and that it had been his duty some time ago to decide unfavourably against a story which I had submitted to the notice of his firm, but that he had intended to write to me a private note urging me to adopt literature as a profession. His



THE GARDEN.

principal object in writing at that time was to suggest my trying the fortunes of the novel which he had already read with Messrs. Routledge, and he kindly added a letter of introduction to that firm in the Broadway—an introduction which, by the way, never came to anything.

Poor Lascelles Wraxall, clever writer and editor, pressman and literary adviser, real Bohemian and true friend—indeed,

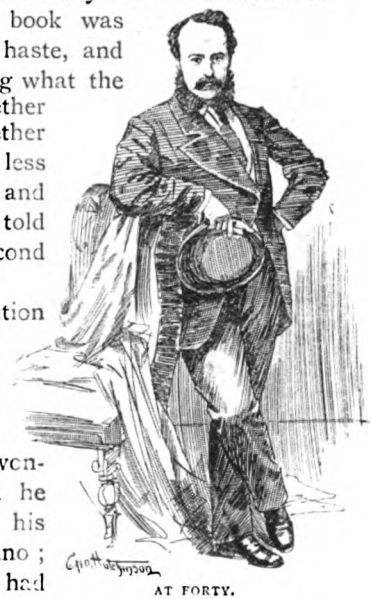


THE DRAWING-ROOM.

everybody's friend but his own—I never think of him but with feelings of deep gratitude. He was a rolling stone, and when I met him for the first time in my life, years afterwards, he had left Marlborough Street for the Crimea; he had been given a commission in the Turkish Contingent at Kertch; he had come back anathematising the service, and "chock full" of grievances against the Government, and he became once more editor and sub-editor, and publisher's hack even at last, until he stepped into his baronetcy—an empty title, for he had sold the reversion of the estates for a mere song long ago—and became special correspondent in Austria for the *Daily Telegraph*. And in Vienna he died, young in years still—not forty, I think—closing a life that only

wanted one turn more of "application," I have often thought, to have achieved very great distinction. There are still a few writing men about who remember Lascelles Wraxall, but they are "the boys of the old brigade."

It was to Lascelles Wraxall I sent, when finished, "The House of Elmore," the reader may very easily guess. Wraxall had stepped so much out of his groove—for the busy literary man that he was—to take me by the hand, and point the way along "the perilous road"; he had given me so many kind words, that I wrote my hardest to complete my new story before I should fade wholly from his recollection. The book was finished in five weeks, and in hot haste, and for months again I was left wondering what the outcome of it all was to be—whether Wraxall was reading my story, or whether —oh, horror!—some other reader less kindly disposed, and more austere and critical, and hard to please, had been told off to sit in judgment upon my second MS.



AT FORTY.

I went back to chess for a distraction till the fate of that book was pronounced or sealed—it was always chess in the hours of my distress and anxiety—and I once again faced Charles Kenny, and once again wondered if he knew, and how much he knew, whilst he was deep in his king's gambit or his giuoco-piano; but he was not even aware that I had sent in a second story, I learned afterwards. And then at last came the judgment—the pleasant, if formal, notice from Marlborough Street that the novel had been favourably reported upon by the reader, and that Messrs. Hurst and Blackett would be pleased to see me at Marlborough Street to talk the matter of its publication over with me. Ah! what a letter that was!—what a surprise, after all!—what a good omen!

And some three months afterwards, at the end of the year 1854, my first book—but my second novel—was launched into the reading world, and I have hardly got over the feeling yet that I had actually a right to dub myself a novelist!

When the first three notices of the book appeared, wild dreams of a brilliant future beset me. They were all favourable notices—too favourable; but *John Bull*, *The Press*, and *Bell's Messenger* (I think they were the papers) scattered favourable notices indiscriminately at that time. Presently the *Athenæum* sobered me a little, but wound up with a kindly pat on the back, and the *Saturday Review*, then in its seventh number, drenched me

MR ROBINSON AT WORK.

with vitriolic acid, and brought me to a lower level altogether; and finally the *Morning Herald* blew a loud blast to my praise and glory—that last notice, I believe, having been written by my old friend Sir Edward Clarke, then a very young reviewer on the *Herald* staff, with no dreams of becoming Her Majesty's Solicitor-General just then! And the "House of Elmore" actually paid its publishers' expenses, and left a balance, and brought me in a little cheque, and thus my writing life began in sober earnest.

Told by the Colonel.

XI.

HOSKINS'S PETS.

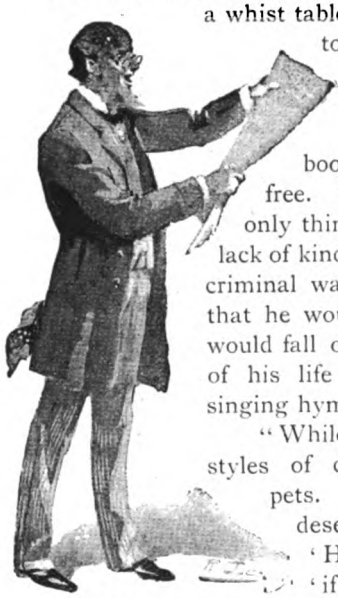
By W. L. Alden. Illustrations by R. Jack.

"YES!" said the Colonel, reflectively, "I've been almost everywhere in my time except in gaol, and I've been in a great deal worse places than a first-class American gaol with all the modern improvements. The fact is, that philanthropic people have gone so far in improving the condition of prisoners, that most of our prisons are rather better than most of our hotels. At any rate, they are less expensive, and the guests are treated with more respect.

"HEAVE FLOWERS INTO HIS CELL."

"I never could understand the craze that some people have for prisoners. For instance, in New York and Chicago, the young ladies have a society for giving flowers to murderers. Whenever a man is convicted of murder and sentenced to be hung, the girls begin to heave flowers into his cell till he can't turn round without upsetting a vase of roses, or a big basin full of pansies, and getting his feet wet. I once knew a murderer who told me that if anything could reconcile him to being hung it would be getting rid of the floral tributes that the girls lavished on him. You see he was one of the leading murderers in that section of country, and consequently he received about a cartload of flowers every day.

"I had a neighbour when I lived in New Berlinopolisville who was the President of the Society for Ameliorating the Condition of Prisoners, and he was the craziest man on the subject that I ever met. His name was Hoskins—Colonel Uriah Hoskins—and he was the author of the Hoskins Bill that attracted so much attention when it was before the Legislature, though it never became a law. The bill provided that every prisoner should have a sitting room as well as a sleeping room, and that it should be furnished with a piano, a banjo, a library, a typewriter, a wine cooler, and a whist table; that the prisoner should be permitted to hold two weekly receptions, to which everybody should be allowed to come, and that he should be taught any branch of study that he might care to take up, books and masters being, of course, supplied free. Colonel Hoskins used to insist that the only thing that made a man go wrong was the lack of kindness, and that the sure way to reform a criminal was to treat him with so much kindness that he would grow ashamed of being wicked, and would fall on everybody's neck and devote the rest of his life to weeping tears of repentance and singing hymns of joy.



"DREW UP A BEAUTIFUL NOTICE."

"While Colonel Hoskins was fond of all styles of criminals, burglars were his particular pets. According to him, a burglar was more deserving of kindness than any other man. 'How would you like it,' he used to say, 'if you had to earn your living by breaking into houses in the middle of the night, instead of sleeping peacefully in your bed? Do you think you would be full of good thoughts after you had been bitten by the watch-dog and fired at by the man of the house, and earned nothing by your labour except a bad cold and the prospect of hydrophobia? There is nothing more brutal than the way in which society treats the burglar, and so long as society refuses to put him in the way of earning an easier and less dangerous living, he cannot be blamed if he continues to practise his midnight profession.'

"I must say this for Colonel Hoskins. He did not confine himself to talk, like many other philanthropists, but he was already trying to carry out his principles. He really meant what

he said about burglars, and there isn't the least doubt that he had more sympathy for them than he had for the honest men of his acquaintance. When people asked him what he would do if he woke up in the night and found a burglar in his house, and whether or not he would shoot at him, he said that he would as soon think of shooting at his own wife, and that he would undertake to reform that burglar then and there by kindness alone. Once somebody said to Hoskins that he ought really to let the burglars know his feelings towards them, and Hoskins said that he would do it without delay.

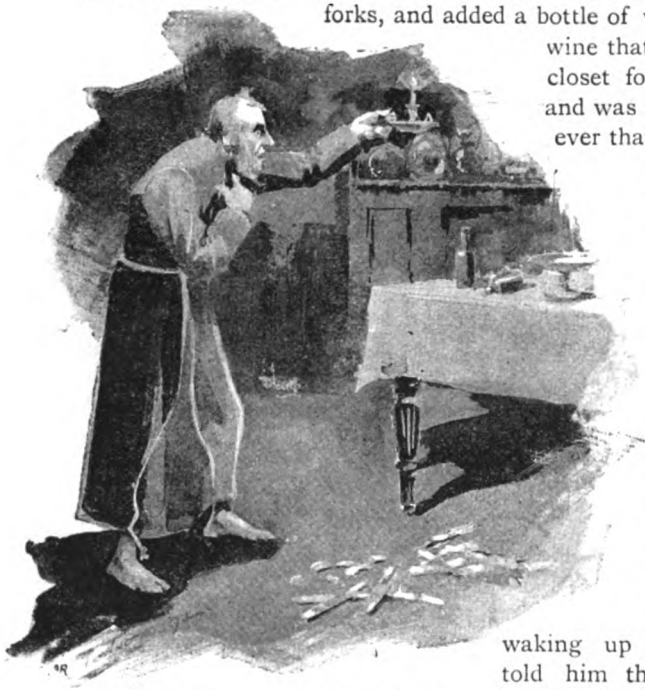
"That same day he drew up a beautiful 'Notice to Burglars,' and had it printed in big letters and framed and hung up in the dining-room of his house. It read in this way: 'Burglars are respectfully informed that the silver-ware is all plated, and that the proprietor of this house never keeps ready money on hand. Cake and wine will be found in the dining-room closet, and burglars are cordially invited to rest and refresh themselves. Please wipe your feet on the mat, and close the window when leaving the house.'

"Colonel Hoskins took a good deal of pride in that notice. He showed it to everyone who called at the house, and said that if other people would follow his example, and treat burglars like Christians and gentlemen, there would soon be an end of burglary, for the burglars would be so touched by the kindness of their treatment that they would abandon the business and become honoured members of society—insurance presidents, or bank cashiers, or church treasurers. He didn't say how the reformed burglars were to find employment in banks and insurance offices, and such, but that was a matter of detail, and he always preferred to devise large and noble schemes, and leave the working details of them to other men.

"One morning, Colonel Hoskins, who was an early riser, went down to the dining-room before breakfast, and was surprised to find that he had had a midnight visit from burglars. Two empty wine bottles stood on the table, and all the cake was eaten, which showed that the burglars had accepted the invitation to refresh themselves. But they did not seem to have accepted it in quite the right spirit. All Hoskins's spoons and forks lay in a heap in the middle of the floor, and every one was twisted or broken so as to be good for nothing. The window had been left open, and the rain had ruined the curtains, and on a dirty piece of paper the burglars had scrawled with a lead pencil the opinion that 'Old Hoskins is the

biggest fule, and the gol-darndest skinflint in the country. You set out whiskey next time, or we'll serve you out.'

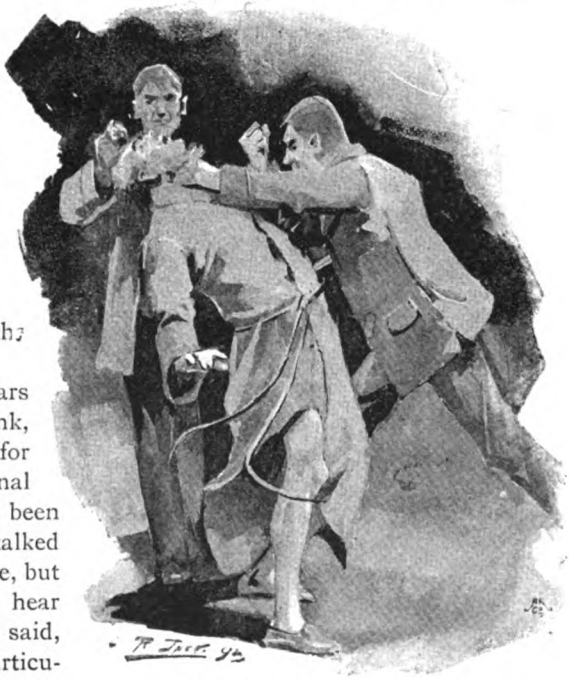
"Hoskins was not in the least cast down by the rudeness of the burglars. 'Poor fellows,' he said, 'they have been so used to bad treatment that they don't altogether appreciate kindness at first. But they will learn.' So he laid in some new spoons and forks, and added a bottle of whiskey to the wine that he kept in the closet for the burglars, and was as confident as ever that the next gang that might break into his house would be melted into tears and repentance, and would call him their best and dearest friend.



"EVERY ONE WAS TWISTED OR BROKEN.'

"A week or two later Mrs. Hoskins was awakened by a noise in the dining-room, and, after waking up her husband, told him that there were burglars in the house, and that he must get out of the back window and go for the police. He told her that he was sorry to see her manifest such an unchristian spirit, and he would show her how burglars ought to be treated. There was not the least doubt that there were burglars in the house, and they were making a good deal more noise than was strictly consistent with the prospect of rising in their profession, for no able burglar ever makes any unnecessary noise while engaged in business, unless, of course, he falls over a coal-scuttle, and then he naturally uses language. St. Paul himself would probably say something pretty strong in similar circumstances. Hoskins was sincerely delighted to have the opportunity to meet his burglarious friends, and he lost no time in dressing and descending to the dining-room.

"He wore his slippers, and the burglars—there were two of them—did not hear him until he was fairly in the dining-room. They were seated at the table, with their feet on the damask table-cloth, and the bottle of whiskey was nearly empty. The Colonel was much pleased to see that they had not damaged his silver-ware, and he was just about to thank them when they saw him. They started up, and one of them caught him by the throat, while the other held a pistol to his head, and promised to blow out his brains if he made the slightest noise. Then they tied him hand and foot, gagged him, and laid him on the floor, and then sat down to finish the whiskey.



"CAUGHT HIM BY THE THROAT."

"Both the burglars were partly drunk, which accounted for the unprofessional noise they had been making. They talked in rather a low tone, but Hoskins could hear everything they said, and it was not particularly encouraging to a gagged and bound philanthropist. They agreed that he was a fool, and a stingy fool, or else he would have kept money in the house, and would have set out lemons and sugar as well as plain whiskey. They said that any man who treated poor working men in that way wasn't fit to live, and that Hoskins would have to be killed, even if it was not necessary—as it plainly was in this case—to kill him in order to prevent him from appearing at any future time as a witness against them. They admitted that the whiskey was not bad of its kind, but they were of the opinion that Hoskins had left it in their way so that they might get drunk and be caught by the police.

"Colonel Hoskins listened to this conversation with horror, and the prospect that the drunken rascals would be as good as their word, and kill him before they left the house, was only a little more painful than the conviction that his method, appealing to the better nature of burglars, had failed for the second time. When the whiskey was exhausted the men rose up and looked at Hoskins, and a happy thought struck one of them. 'Thishyer idiot,' he said, 'may not have any money in the house, but he's bound to have some in the bank, and he's going to write us a cheque for a thousand dollars, provided we let him off, and don't kick his brains out this time.' The other burglar, who was in that benevolent frame of mind that Irish whiskey and conscious virtue sometimes produce, agreed to the suggestion, and Hoskins was therefore unbound and seated at the table, and told to draw a cheque at once if he had the least regard for his life. As he was gagged he could not explain to the burglars the kind feelings that he still had towards them, and the fact that they could not draw the money on the cheque without being captured by the police. So he simply signed the cheque, and groaned to think that the poor burglars were so slow to be reformed in the way that he had hoped they would be.

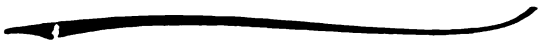
"TIED HIM IN A CHAIR."

"When this business was over, the burglars tied Hoskins's wrists together again, and then tied him in a chair. Then they set to work to do all the damage they could do without making too much noise. They tore the curtains and hacked the piano with knives, and poured a jug of golden syrup over the carpet. Then they plastered Colonel Hoskins's face with raspberry jam, and emptied a sack of flour over his head, and went away, telling him that if he ever again ventured to trifle with the feelings of poor but self-respecting men, they would put him to death by slow tortures.

"Hoskins sat in the chair for a couple of hours, till his wife timidly crept downstairs and released him. It took him a good hour to get the jam and the flour out of his hair and whiskers, and as Mrs. Hoskins said that he was in no state to enter a decent bedroom, and made him wash at the pump in the back yard, he found it a rather cold operation. Perhaps it was the remarks that Mrs. Hoskins addressed to him during the operation that irritated him, for she intimated very plainly that he was no better than a professional idiot, and when a man's hair is stuck together with jam remarks of this sort from the wife of his bosom seem to be lacking in tenderness. However that may be, Colonel Hoskins had no sooner got himself into what his wife condescended to call a state of comparative decency, than he took down his 'Notice to Burglars,' and tore it into a thousand pieces. That day he had an electric burglar alarm put into his house; he bought the savagest dog that he could find, and he stopped the payment of the cheque, which, however, was never presented. He continued to be the President of the Society for Ameliorating the Condition of Prisoners, but he steadily refused to ameliorate a single prisoner convicted of burglary, and while he was always a lunatic in regard to other criminals, he openly maintained that a burglar was the worst of men, and that kindness was utterly thrown away upon him. He never had any more burglars in his house, though the dog now and then lunched off warm leg when some stranger to that part of the country

"MADE HIM WASH AT THE PUMP."

ventured into the Hoskins's premises at night. Hoskins was very fond of the animal, which was quite right, but his practice of leaving a bottle of whiskey, with an ounce of strychnine in it, on the dining-room table every night, in case a burglar should succeed in getting into the house, was, in my opinion, going a little too far. Antimonial wine would have been much more humane and sufficiently effective. But there is no man who is more severe than a philanthropist who has been turned sour."



Experiences of a 'Varsity Oar.

By an "Old Blue."
(F. C. Drake.)
Illustrations by Ernest Prater.

ROWING in the University Boat Race is not a thing to be undertaken lightly. To begin with, it involves great muscular exertion; but this is not unpleasant, and, as I shall presently show, is not dangerous. Further, it ties the aspirant to his oar for at least ten weeks, which is perhaps its greatest disadvantage; and it involves intense application and a pretty good temper under remarks from the "coach" that are sometimes almost more than caustic. But against these drawbacks are to be set the pleasure of gratified ambition, the healthy life, and, best of all, the sensation of the flight of the boat driven by eight men, of whom none are really bad oarsmen, and some are uncommonly good. Putting these side by side, no one need wonder that an old Blue should look on the time he spent at Putney as one of the best in his life.

I will pass over the preliminary work at the University, for it contains nothing novel or interesting, and is mainly consumed in settling the crew who are finally to row, and in getting the men "hard" by long, steady work, to get rid of fat and replace it by muscle. The real interest begins when the crew has been settled, and the men have had their colours given them, and are looking forward shortly to leaving the home waters. By this time they are fairly "fit," and, as they have in all cases of doubt had the very best medical opinions, they are not very likely to go wrong. There is a good deal of nonsense talked about the dangers of this race to health. No man who is not absolutely sound in wind and limb is allowed to begin training at all, for the obvious reason that the captain does not want one of his men to fail him at the last moment. It is about as probable that a man should go tiger shooting without looking to see if his rifle is loaded, as that the President of a University Boat Club should select an oarsman who is likely to "crock up."

It is when the crew leave the home waters that the really enjoyable part of the training begins. The Cambridge crew generally, and the Oxford men not infrequently, go straight to Putney, but a far more pleasant plan is to spend a week or so on the up-river waters before going to the Metropolitan course.

Everyone knows Cookham in its summer dress, with a plentiful crowd of holiday-makers on the water; but in the very early spring, before the foliage has begun to appear, and when the light-hearted champagne bottle still nestles in its straw, it has also a very great charm of its own. The fresh air, and the change to new scenes, together with the strong stream caused by winter rains, make the men feel like young bullocks, and the boat moves with twice the spring it had before. The jolly lounging life in between whiles, diversified with songs, saloon-pistols, and the like, the pleasant walk over the hills on Sunday, and the total freedom from all thoughts and cares, beyond the beating of a record over the course next day, all go to make up an Elysian life.

"A WORK OF GENIUS."

Every now and then the amusement is varied by the rather boisterous humour of the elements. Some five years ago the state of the tide at Putney rendered it necessary to do most of the work early in the morning. It was freezing hard, with occasional showers of snow, and the cox-swain absolutely was able to stand his coat up when he took it off. It had got drenched, and was frozen stiff! I have several times been in a boat when we had to land and empty out the water, that had broken over the bow oars in such quantities as almost to sink us. Occasionally, boats have quite sunk from the same cause, while the men stuck to their thwarts, presenting a comic appearance as they rowed away, seated, as it seemed, in the water.

A great consideration in estimating the happiness of such a time as this is the question, "What did you have to eat?" But the answer to this has been given so many times that it would be merely wearisome now to detail the various dishes that are or are not "good for training." Enough to say that, as everybody knows, the old rigorous system of raw beef and beer is a thing of the past—except the beer. Nowadays, it is considered sufficient to banish all very unwholesome things from the table, while keeping as nearly as possible to each man's ordinary diet. In point of quantity there are practically no restrictions, unless the Captain considers that any man does not know when he has had enough (which, alas! may occur); in which case he may remonstrate with

him gently, but firmly. I have seen a man eat for breakfast a sole and a half, three chops, a poached egg, and some watercress; but I confess that this was regarded as a work of genius. The ordinary man in training eats only about twice as much as any sane person, or perhaps a little more; and as, of course, the system needs recuperating under the great strains that are put upon it, this trifling excess has its justification.

However, the result of this wear and tear and repair of the muscular tissue is that the activity of the mind decreases in inverse proportion to that of the body; and during a hard course of training the rowing man is generally rather sleepy and unintellectual. This matters all the less that studies are forbidden—not a very difficult rule to enforce—during the latter part of the time. But training once over, the strength and health accumulated can certainly do no harm either physical or mental, and a healthy body is the best guarantee for an active mind (see Latin authors and copybooks *passim*).

"LAPPED IN PROFOUNDEST SLEEP."

About three weeks or less before the race a move is made to Putney, where, as a general rule, very comfortable quarters are provided. The pleasantest of all that the Oxford crew have had lately has been the Lyric Club House; but it is not really a good place for the men's health. Lying, as it does, just down by the river, the air is not half so bracing as that of the higher ground. Still, it is undoubtedly very convenient to have a billiard table or two to while away the men's time in the evening. Without something of the kind time is apt to hang very heavily on their hands. Conversation flags, the chairs feel very comfortable after the day's work, and Morpheus, drowsy god, steals in unawares. Now, this is not only bad hygienically, but is apt to have very awkward consequences of a different kind. One man more wakeful than the rest casts his eye around, seeking for his prey. He spies an unfortunate lapped

in profoundest sleep. His hand steals out and clutches a book. He hurls it—and in a moment all is confusion. Each man, starting from his guilty slumbers, springs up to cast the proverbial stone, and in this case usually a book, at his fellow-sinner, vowing that he has been watching the nodding of the victim, and only waiting for the proper moment to visit him with condign punishment. And so, with protestations, objurgations, and such light and cheerful pastime, the hours roll away till the happy 10.30 comes, when all incontinently roll off to bed.

"'TAKE IT OFF.'"

But if the men go to bed early, they make up for it by rising early too; and if they are sleepy at night, they feel delightfully fresh in the morning. A brisk walk over the common sends the human barometer spinning upwards; they feel ready for any fun that comes in their way. And, alas! did not this same buoyancy of spirit not many years ago involve certain respectable oarsmen in a difference with the executive? *Tacenda*, indeed! Yet if a rabbit springs up out of the gorse, and the dogs are off in full cry, can nature in such a mood be stubborn?

In between whiles the men are left almost entirely to themselves, and are free to seek what innocent diversion they please. The choice certainly is not very varied. Beyond paying a visit to the opposing crew, chatting with friends who have come to see the practices, or looking in at the local skittle alley, there is very little to do. But if they lack diversion themselves, they do not fail to cause great delight to the juvenile population of Barnes and Putney. It must be premised, for the benefit of all who are not *habitués* of Putney, that the crews always wear during their training the coat and cap of their University

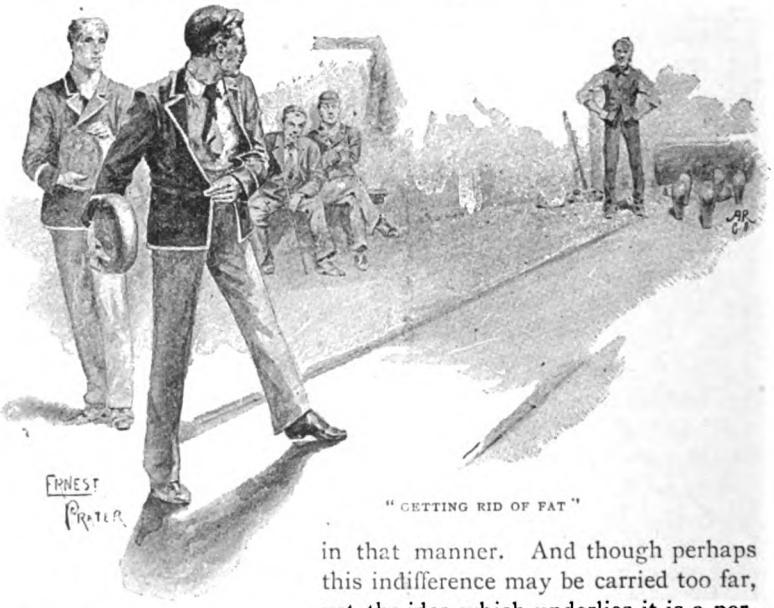
Boat Club, and flannel trousers. There are reasons which make this a very necessary and laudable practice; but in the juvenile mind it gives rise to the most uncompromising scorn, which finds various ways of expressing itself. "Take it off" is one of the most popular of these, and though it certainly suffers from a lack of originality, it appears to give great satisfaction. Another, more recondite, but perhaps ironical, is "Put it on." "Where's yer trousers?" "Go it, white legs!" "Who's yer hatter?" and many similar cries, all testify to the joyous humour of the river-side youth.

Hardly less amusing are the comments of the crowd as the men pass through to their boat-house. "That's Nickalls," explains the well-informed gentleman as a Cambridge man goes by. Or, as the lightweight hurries past, "Don't look as if 'e could do it," remarks a bystander, "looks to want a day out at grass for them calves." Or, "'Ere, I say, 'e's eat a bit of beef in his day, I know," as the heavy man comes in sight. It is a good-humoured crowd, and if the strong tobacco is a bit offensive when one's not allowed to smoke oneself, things can't be always as we should like them to be.

"'E'S EAT A BIT OF BEEF IN HIS DAY.'"

It is the custom for the Oxford crew to use the London Rowing Club boat-house, while the Cambridge men are accommodated at the Leander Club next door, and there is accordingly a good crowd in front of each at practice times, eager to see the men on whose prowess their own modest half-crowns are staked. Unfortunately, as some of my readers may have experienced, it is not always easy to find out the exact time when the crews are going out. In fact, the Captain is an autocrat on these occasions, who rules alike over crew, critics, and the general public without distinction of persons, and who shows a splendid indifference for the latter's convenience.

He launches the boat at all kinds of wondrous times, not shrinking from starting half-an-hour or more before the time he has arranged, and thus disappointing a number of would-be spectators. It is even said that he often chooses parts of the river for doing the hard work where there are no well-known landmarks, so that no clear "line" can be given to the outside public. This may be so. The workings of the Presidential mind are dark and mysterious. But I doubt if the convenience of the public has sufficient weight with him either one way or the other to influence his plans



"GETTING RID OF FAT"

in that manner. And though perhaps this indifference may be carried too far, yet the idea which underlies it is a perfectly just one. The University Boat Race began as a private match, of a more or less impromptu character (those were the days when they rowed from Westminster to Putney in a huge Noah's Ark of a boat, and stopped for beer and biscuits on the way down, and when, it is said, the Speaker of the House of Commons used to leave the chair to let the M.P.'s run out and see the start—but we digress). Then, by degrees, it attained to its present position of a great festive gathering of the many-headed, where only about one in every ten cares to glance at the race as it goes by. But, above all things, the race is, and has been, a purely sporting event. The British lion may put on his holiday suit and gamble to his heart's content on the bank, but the sole concern of the Captain of either crew is to bring his men well up to the scratch, and have a thoroughly good, honest race. He has nothing to do with

letting the spectators know the real state of the odds, or helping them to win their money.

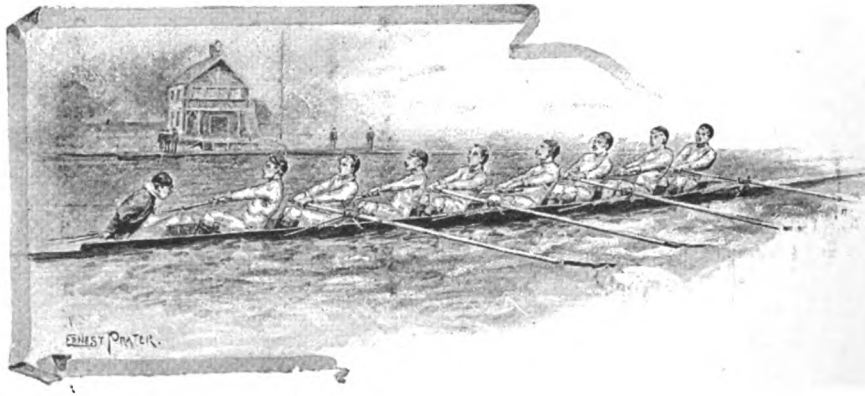
It must be confessed that, in spite of the many pleasures indicated as belonging to this training, one gets very tired of it, just as one might tire of living in Arcadia, if, as is probable, there were no Club or Italian Opera there. It is with considerable joy, therefore, that one hails the approach of the race when it is still a week off; but this feeling is apt to be modified as the days draw on after that. "Funk," of course, attacks everybody more or less; but its violence differs very widely in different men. Many of the most unlikely people are most liable to it; and it would probably astonish a good many people were I to say who is the "funkiest" oarsman before a race that I know. I mean by "funk," not the under-estimating of one's chances—for some of the most nervous men have a very shrewd idea of them—but the irrational excitement which keeps the brain constantly thinking of the impending race, and prevents the sufferer from sitting still or having any comfort, or, in the most serious cases, any sleep, for two or three days before it. It is a real malady, which is most distressing to those who are subject to it, but which, luckily, does not do any harm when once the race is begun.

Of the race itself there is very little to say, except one thing, that could not be said equally well of a hard game of football or a foot race across country. The exertion is, no doubt, considerably greater than is involved in either of these, but the physical sensations are very much the same, and anyone who has entered for any race at all knows the sort of feeling of desperate resolve which is the pleasure that racing gives. Except one thing, I said, and it is that thing which puts boat racing, in many people's minds, far above any other form of sport. It is this, that while in a foot race a man can leave off as soon as he finds the exertion more than the prize is worth, and while in football a man may recover his breath in the scrimmage or justifiably leave the work for a moment to the others, in rowing every man knows that, by a single careless stroke, he may throw the whole boat into a confusion from which they often cannot recover for many hundred yards. Everyone is expected in a boat race, and in a University race as much as anywhere, to row his best and hardest every stroke he takes, and never to slack off at all. If it is considered desirable to save up for a spurt at the finish, the "stroke" will do that by putting in a few less strokes to the minute till the time comes. Every man behind him is bound in honesty to the rest to shove every stroke through "as if there were no hereafter"; and when the "hereafter" comes, as it does about Chiswick Eyot, he will

have to rely on the thorough condition he is in to pull him through. It follows that the whole secret of a good crew is that each man rows hard because it would not be fair to his neighbours in the boat if he rowed lightly, not entirely because he wants to win the race. I do not want to disparage other sports in the least degree; pluck enters into them fully as much as into rowing. The difference lies in the incentive.

Boat races, of course, vary very much in the amount of excitement they afford; not differing in this from any other sort of contest. Of the last five races, that of '91 was the most keenly contested, though the '90 race runs it very close. Both of them were ding-dong struggles all the way, now one boat and then the other taking the lead, and neither of them were really won till the post was passed. Closer finishes have been known, though hardly beating these in point of excitement during the race itself. The well-known dead heat of '77 is an instance; on which occasion legend hath it that the ancient umpire had been regaling himself hard by, and arrived on the scene as the boats shot by the post, too flustered to take any very accurate observations. However, as both crews were pretty confident that they had won, his decision displayed no small share of that low cunning that used to make a successful umpire.

But all things have an end. The long training is passed, and you are seated in the boat. The race gets finished, one way or the other, and you are seated at the festive board. The dinner vanishes from the table, and you wake up next morning feeling very glad when you remember you can stop an hour longer in bed. And the vision of an editor is at hand to hint that these reminiscences must not prove an exception to the general rule, but must also come to a conclusion.



Is Childhood the Happiest or the most Miserable Period of One's Existence?

G. R. Sims says it depends upon the child.

It depends so much upon the child. As a child, my greatest delight was to give swagger dinner parties to my brothers and sisters in the nursery on winter afternoons, when we could not go out. The principal delicacy in these entertainments was an orange *sorbet* specially prepared by my own hands. Here is the recipe. Squeeze into a small cup the juice of half an orange, fill up with snow, scraped from the outside window sill, and serve cold. Now, although the preparation of this delightful delicacy gave me an immense amount of happiness, I could rarely induce any grown-up people to partake of it. Then there was a wine which always graced the table at our nursery feasts. We called it currant wine, and made it by putting a handful of grocer's currants into a wineglass, filling up with cold water, and stirring the mixture up with a piece of firewood until the liquid was a rich brown. I have often, in later life, paid fifteen shillings for a bottle of champagne, and not felt half so happy over it as I used to be over a teaspoonful of our own home-made currant wine. In these matters childhood *was* the happiest period of my life. With regard to the enjoyment of "games," I never played many as a child, but as a man I have derived the greatest possible pleasure from them. I never learned to skip till I was thirty, and at thirty-five my greatest delight was a game of battledore and shuttlecock. Now that I am turned forty I have given up violent exercise, and taken to playing with boxes of bricks and tin soldiers. I am sure that I am far happier with them, now, than I was as a child. In my old nursery days I always quarrelled with my brothers and sisters about our toys, and we generally

finished up by throwing them at each other. Now I can sit on the floor in the long winter evenings and perform the most wonderful architectural feats with my box of bricks, and nobody thinks of interfering with me. With my soldiers, too, I am much happier. I can place the French and German armies in battle array, and devote my mind entirely to complex strategical operations without having to keep one eye on the armies and the other on the baby. Our baby was always putting my soldiers in his mouth; and, on one occasion, he completely crippled the Russian forces by swallowing their only general at a critical moment. So far as toys are concerned I am sure that childhood was *not* the happiest period of my life. The real charm of childhood, however, is its lack of the sense of responsibility. It is the sense of responsibility which comes with manhood that destroys the charm of life, and makes us think of our irresponsible childhood with regret. A child hasn't to trouble about the rent, or the butcher's bill, or of what the world will think of it, or of the duties it owes to society, to the family, or to itself. At the cost of a few tears or a sustained shriek it can get almost anything it wants, and it is waited on hand and foot at somebody else's expense. It has absolutely no responsibility beyond being occasionally left alone in the nursery with a little brother or sister, with instructions to see that baby doesn't fall into the fire. This, bar the bother of having to grab the baby violently by the hair to keep it from mischief, is ideal happiness; and I have known some children to whom the hair grabbing was a pleasure rather than a duty. It is the "responsibility" which comes with age which always causes us to compare it unfavourably with childhood. In another matter, manhood compares favourably with childhood. A man can be as naughty as he likes, and there is nobody to whip him unless he is a garrotter. Childhood is *not* the happiest period for those who like to be naughty, and naughtiness is the general idea of happiness. If it were not so everybody would try to be good. Up to the time of going to press no really popular movement in that direction has been discovered by Reuter or Dalziel, or "our own correspondent."

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Miss Clo Graves thinks it an unpleasant period.

The first thing a baby does is to howl. If that child knew that he had got a joyous, gamesome time before him, he wouldn't. He would smile. But one of the most endearing characteristics of childhood is its candour, and the baby knows that croup lies waiting round the corner to seize him by the throat, that thrush lurks

in the imperfectly-washed feeding-bottle, that wind-spasms and teething convulsions only wait their opportunity to mark him for their prey, and so he howls:

"Ah! *(A pant.)*
Ah-ha! AH! *(A pause to gather forces.)*
Ah-ha! Ah-ha! Ah-ha!
Ah! AH! E'EE!"
(Fortissimo, crescendo, and *ad libitum.)*

The nurse will be likely to say it is a pin, but it is not. It is because the baby guesses what it has got to go through before it grows up. If ever it grows up at all. There is a period between childhood and maturity of which one doesn't want to write. No man likes to remember that he was once a long-legged, red-wristed hobbledehoy, who drowned his freckles in blushes when girls, who did not happen to be his sisters, looked at him, and shaved surreptitiously with his mother's scissors. No woman cares about looking back to the days when she had thick ankles, which her skirts were not long enough to cover; when she wore her hair in a pigtail, because she was too old to wear it loose upon her shoulders, and too young to turn it up; when the front hooks and eyes of her frock were always bursting off, and her sister's sweethearts used to call her "little girl." A humiliating experience altogether, the period of adolescence. But more humiliating still it is to be a mature, grown-up person, and know how far off you are from being the wonderful creature you intended to be, when you began the world. You did not contemplate being exactly beautiful—it is not for everyone to achieve that—but you meant to be commanding. You were going to do everything well: to succeed gloriously—to be distinguished and brilliant—knock lumps off this poor old globe, in fact. And now—well—you haven't! The clay you're made of is the ordinary kind: not the blue earth diamonds grow in. You might make up for your absolute lack of individuality by a brilliant suicide. But you don't. You're too commonplace. You're contented to go on being nobody. This may be a calm state, but it is certainly not a happy one.

* * * *

But there are exceptions.

And yet there is a childhood which is, maybe, the happiest period of our existence. Not the time of the shining morning face—of the curled top-knot—for to the excoriating action of the soaped towel was due that facial polish, and the twisting of the damped hair

around the long-tailed ivory brush was attended with the shedding of bitter tears of rage and pain. But the second edition of the Book of Infancy, bound in shrivelled yellow leather and printed in faded ink. "The world," say the slippered pantaloon and the mumbling grandame, "was a fine place when we were young." And what is more, they really believe it. He was strong, fascinating and handsome—she was clever and beautiful. Both may say so as often as they like, and everybody credits them—because they are so old. *Comple et amur illam et amemus: plena est voluptatis si illâ scias uti.* Come, gentle Dotage! Shade me with thy kindly wing, lend me thy rose-coloured horn-glasses! Let me view the Past, not as it was, but as I would have had it. So shall the children cluster round my knee, and listen, wide-eyed and envying, as I tell them of the golden days of *my* childhood, and the young people sigh, hearing of the brave and brilliant, beautiful and noble things that never happened in the bygone time when I was young. Only the middle-aged folk look a little doubtful, and Death, leaning over the back of my arm-chair, laughs outright, and taps me—as a reproving nurse might—on the withered lips with one bony finger-tip. After which I fall asleep, and am carried away to bed.

* * * *

Alden philosophises.

I have not been a child for several years; it is unnecessary to mention the precise number, but I have a clear recollection of the period. My childhood was certainly happy, so far as I was personally concerned, but I will not go so far as to say that it was a source of unmixed happiness to others. As to whether childhood is the happiest or the most miserable part of our existence, there is so much to be said on both sides that I am almost inclined to answer the question in a judicious and statesmanlike way, by saying that I yield to no one in my profound appreciation of the wide-reaching importance of the question, and that the day will certainly come when the awakened conscience of the nation will demand its settlement in accordance with right and justice. When that time arrives I need hardly say that I shall be found on the side of justice, but I am not yet wholly convinced that the time has fully arrived. In the meantime, however, I do not hesitate to say that in those cases where childhood is happier than mature age there can be but little doubt among thinking men of all shades of belief that maturity is, in some respects, at least less demonstrably happy than childhood. Now that would be eminently judicious, but, on the other hand, it would look like an underhanded attempt to

introduce politics into the *Idler*. It will be better, therefore, to treat the subject in a philosophic way. The question which the Editors of the *Idler* ask is, after all, a question as to the relative advantages of Idealism and Realism—spelled with the largest kind of capital letters. The small boy is ordinarily an Idealist, unless, of course, he belongs to the unhappy class of small boys who have to earn their own living when they ought to be at play, and who, having no time for dreaming, become Realists of the most hardened and painful type. In the former case the small boy is happy, for he lives in a world of his own creation, and for the purpose of happiness such a world is far better than the actual world. In the latter case he is generally more or less unhappy, for he is compelled to see the world as it really is, and he finds it not all nice. The realistic small boy can have very little true happiness. Fancy M. Zola's childhood: assuming, of course, that he was then a Realist, which he probably was not, judging from the fact that he is only a Realist professionally at the present day. To the childish Zola, life must have presented itself as a series of human documents. He saw things as they were, not as a small boy should see them. He could have had no genuine longings for a life of piracy, for he saw that the pirate, instead of being a gorgeously-dressed and nobly-chivalrous hero, was only a brutal ruffian travelling on the road to Execution Dock. Tin soldiers could have brought him no happiness, for he knew that they were only lifeless bits of tin, as incapable of fighting as the army of Monaco. It gave him no pleasure to be dressed in a pasteboard helmet and to wear a tin sword, for he knew that grown-up people would not mistake him for a soldier; and that a blue flannel shirt, and a cap with the name of some frigate on a silk ribbon, would not lead foreigners to believe that he was a French admiral at the age of seven. He may have found some little pleasure in playing marbles—not, of course, for the sake of that silly game, but for the reason that marbles are portable property, and that the more marbles a boy wins the richer he is—but for all other boyish diversions he must have felt a profound contempt.

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Beyond all doubt M. Zola would say that he is happier to-day (with "Nana" in its 150th thousand) than he was in his childhood, but that is because his childhood was devoid of Idealism. On the other hand, if I may be pardoned for mentioning myself in the same paragraph with the greatest novelist of all time, my own childhood was

And doesn't know.

happy because I lived purely in a world of the imagination. There never was a bolder or more truly noble pirate than I was during the hour of the Sunday sermon, when I whiled away the good clergyman's discourse by sweeping the seas in my piratical schooner, and harrowing the Spanish Main. My tin soldiers were flesh and blood heroes, my kites flew nearly to the outer limits of the solar system, and I never quite lost the belief that I could dig a tunnel to China with the kitchen fire-shovel, had the cook only had sufficient scientific zeal to be willing to lend it to me for a few hours. I was very happy then, but I am equally happy now. I have never got over the Idealism of my childhood, and I make my own political and social world to-day quite as irrationally and delightfully as I did eighty—well, when I was a child. I do find, I admit, that one cannot be an Idealist in financial matters, which is, after all, the main source of unhappiness in mature life, but if you ask me whether I was happier in childhood than I am now, I should not know how to answer. All of which goes to show that I might have done better if I had stuck to the safe and judicious in my attempted answer, instead of yielding to the temptation to be philosophical.

* * * *

Miss Florence Marryat thinks it the most miserable.

If I am to choose one, or the other, extreme, I should say decidedly the most miserable, and made so by the folly, ignorance, or neglect of parents. Not one-hundredth part of the men and women who marry are fit to become fathers and mothers. Who does not pity the wretched little mortal whom one meets, dressed up in some fantastic or grotesque costume, to gratify the vanity of those who own it, forbidden to run or play, for fear of spoiling the velvet tunic, or silken sash—unable to be comfortable even, on account of buttoned boots and kid gloves? A child is simply a young animal. Give it warmth and food and liberty, and it will be happy and hungry and healthy! To dress it up in the fashion, and let it be dragged at the heels of an indifferent nursemaid along a pavement, is tantamount to confining a puppy by a heavy chain to a kennel. I believe the greatest misery of children arises from their being so culpably trusted to the care of servants. A fashionable mother engages a head-nurse, who is well-mannered, respectful, and experienced, and thereupon delivers over her children to her entire jurisdiction, perfectly content if they appear before her, at stated periods, clean and neat, with smiling faces. She little knows how (in the majority of instances) the poor little creatures are coerced, by nursery discipline, not to betray their real feelings for the woman who has them under her influence day and night.

At one time, when I walked daily in Hyde Park, I constantly met a nurse whose behaviour to the children under her charge excited my greatest indignation. If one of the little ones lagged behind with the nursemaid, or whimpered, because it was cold or tired, the head-nurse would shake it by the arm, or strike it across the head with such violence as to upset its equilibrium, and her voice at all times was harsh and repellent. I knew it would be useless to speak to her, but one day I followed her home to a house in Park Lane, and, sending up my card, asked if I could speak to the mistress of it. The flunky informed me she was Lady—let us say, "the Lord knows who"—and I was presently admitted to her presence. I did not stand on ceremony with "Lady the Lord knows who." I told her I made no excuse for disturbing her, because if she loved her children she would be very much obliged to me for telling her, from my personal observation, that she had (unconsciously no doubt) trusted them to the care of a woman who was not fit to take charge of a dog. Her ladyship heard me to the end, and then, rising grandly, touched the bell for her flunky and said, "Many thanks for the trouble you have taken, but I have the utmost confidence in my attendants." And so I was bowed out again. How many parents live with the little children they have brought into the world? How many teach them, or explain to them, all they want to know? It is too much trouble! All that sort of thing is delegated to hirelings. How often has one heard an intelligent child snubbed for the very questioning which should be encouraged! The bright, eager little brain, just opening, as it were, to all the wonders of living, is bursting to know the why and wherefore of everything it sees, and for answer to its excited enquiries it only gets such rebuffs as "Don't worry!" "Hold your tongue!" "If you don't behave yourself I'll send you out of the room." Which of us who have brains cannot remember the heart-sickening feeling of having in some unconscious manner done wrong by asking questions which our elders were probably too ignorant to answer? And then followed the intense longing to be "grown-up," and independent. Can't we all remember that longing to be "grown-up?" Is it not in itself an answer to the question if childhood is not a miserable period, except perhaps for a favoured few?

And gives the reason why.

* * * *

I fail to see how you can assert or deny upon this question. There are thousands of happy children in the world, and thousands as miserable as any grown-up person. It depends entirely upon those responsible for the individual infant; and a babe's environment is really unimportant, because, before intelligence sets in, a child wants

Phillpotts temporises.

little more than warmth and good food, and general looking after. At that early period the human young are on much the same level as cats and dogs. My dog is just as happy as the Prince of Wales's Pomeranian, because I satisfy him; social distinction has no charm for him; bones and literary society are sufficient for a creature devoid of conscious intelligence. In the same way an infant may be happy at a workhouse, perhaps even more so than in a Park Lane nursery—if there are such things as Park Lane nurseries. But it is when intellect dawns, and a child is able himself to say whether he is happy or unhappy, that he becomes interesting. Then, as before, his measure of joy or sorrow must depend upon those fellow-creatures who form his society. Probably the rule that obtains of men and women holds good of children also: the less brain power the more happiness. Intellect—especially a growing intellect—will give a child lightning flashes of joy denied to his more thick-headed brother; but much sorrow must also result from his extra intelligence. If he rises higher, he will sink far lower, too. The placid, ordinary youth thinks less, and digests his food better, and has a pleasanter time, on the whole. A sensitive child feels with a keen freshness that only years can blunt. To see some fool of a man crushing a clever child is heart-rending. By curious, misguided instincts, children always look up to their full-grown companions; and the result is, that any adult ass can nip in the bud precious childish fancies, or make fatuous and crushing replies to childish inquiries, which show in themselves the trembling dawn of an intellect far superior to his own.

* * * *

And says that clever men loathe childhood.

As a rule, you will find that clever men look back at their childhood with lively loathing, while the average Briton, if Heaven has given him enough memory to recall his earliest youth at all, says that it was all right as far as he can remember. In my own small case (and, after all, personal experience is never uninteresting—to the person), I can say that until I went to a day-school at the age of seven, or it may have been less, I had a fairly good time. Open air has a great deal to do with happiness in a child—open air and plenty of wholesome food, and satisfactory parents. Not that the victim cares overmuch for rice-puddings or a good mother; but these things leave their mark. As to mothers, I should say they have got more men and women into Heaven than any bishop, priest, deacon, or professional Churchman whatsoever. Personally, I am still here, and should be the last to make sure of anything, or count my own chickens before they are hatched, but I have the privilege of knowing men and women, to the number of at least five, who are undoubtedly bound for Golden Shores; and it was their mothers' doing in every case. Fathers, too, have

their significance, but it is purely temporal, and never much concerns an infant until the child reaches that advanced platform of intelligence whereon questions concerning pocket-money arise.

* * * *

Mrs. Panton thinks it *ought* to be the happiest.

There would be no difficulty whatever in replying to the question, if it runs, "*Should* childhood be the happiest or most miserable period of our existence?" because, I am sure, we should one and all agree that it most certainly should: for we have no cares then, no responsibilities; our clean pinafores are worn without the least notice of what they cost to wash; our dinners, if unappetising, are regular, and, if they are not paid for, do not weigh upon either our minds or our bodies; while we neither look forward nor backward, and enjoy our existence from day to day with all the freedom from care and anxiety which, we suppose, characterises the life of a puppy or a kitten. But all this presupposes that we are not in the group of tyrants, either in the nursery, schoolroom, or dining room, and that those who have charge of us remember their own days of childhood: recollect all the dreams, threats, and fancies which can turn them into a period of absolute torture; and, above all, consider that a child is not a sheet of plain blank paper, but that it is a composite arrangement of all the ancestors that one can remember, and of many that one cannot: for unless this is so, no words of mine can describe the misery that can be inflicted on a sensitive, dreamy child, who, to a certain extent, is heavily handicapped in the race of life by the feeble vitality which, as a rule, accompanies such a disposition, and who all too often is made a liar by harsh dealing, and an invalid in life by the hardening process, so dear to the hearts of so many fathers, mothers, and governesses. If, on the contrary, a child is carefully studied—if it be regarded as one by itself and not a sample of a batch, which must be just as are its brothers and sisters—I maintain that childhood must be the very happiest time that we can have: the dreams and happenings, which fill our nights and days, make both equally delightful, while if we are tired to death by lessons and the daily walk, we soon grow out of this, because we can build our own castles in the air out of the driest possible task, and make long and elaborate romances for ourselves out of the—most likely very common-place—people we meet on our morning scamper. Then, too, was there not the never-to-be-forgotten joy of the yearly visit to the sea, and an equally well-loved return to our usual routine in London, to say nothing of the fascinations of making up one's mind on the subject of what one was going to be, and how one was to benefit and astonish a world that up to the present time has not seemed quite to come up to our expectations on the subject? Undoubtedly then I say, if the child is in proper hands, that childhood is the happiest time we can possibly have

Barry Pain says childish happiness is a delusion.

I have never understood the feelings of those who are sorry that they are full-grown. To different children there is, of course, a different childhood; but, as a rule, the happiness of childhood is a delusion, and the peace of the perambulator a myth. I believe that any brave and intelligent man can count on the fingers of one hand the things that would really hurt him seriously; the longer you live, the more you realise how few things are really important. But the troubles of childhood are numberless. The agony of terror is alone enough to make childhood the most miserable part of one's existence. The dead came out of their graves and walked into my nursery by night; I dared not open my eyes lest I should see them. There was a waiting figure behind every curtain in dim-lit passages. There were pictures in books that haunted me; I knew two or three of them well—I knew the page on which they came. I opened the book and turned almost up to the dreaded page, and then waited; but I had to go on always. I had to see the eyes staring into mine, and the lips writhing. Then I shut the book quickly, and went away to do something or other that would take my mind away from the picture. I am glad that I am grown-up; I should not care to endure such maddening terrors again. I was far too much ashamed of them then to speak of them; that made them worse. I think that no one who, as a child, was afraid of the dark, would look back upon childhood as the pleasantest period of his life. And, if a child has more troubles than a man, he undoubtedly has fewer pleasures. A child's pleasures are mostly due to its love of acquisition, its vanity, or its appetite being temporarily satisfied. From its natural affection for its parents or friends—if that affection is very strong—it gets far more suffering than pleasure. Any man of average intelligence can do better than that; he has work that interests him, books, or music, or pictures that mean far more to him than any child's pleasure means to the child. It is easy to love children; one of the chief reasons is that pity is akin to love. And on this question of the unhappiness of childhood, I would sooner trust a man's memory than a child's direct statement.

* * * *

Barr is sorry for the small boy.

The small boy, poor little chap, lives under the most galling despotism that exists on the face of the earth. There is no court of appeal for him. His father is at once his judge, his opposing counsel, his public prosecutor, as it were, his jailer, and his executioner. Every man is a natural tyrant. It has taken centuries of bloodshed and martyrdom on the part of the oppressed to obtain even the poor semblance of liberty that we flatter ourselves we possess. Kings have been beheaded, thrones have

been overturned, cities have been given to the flames, and countries have suffered pillage and rapine, all to knock it into the head of that tyrannical brute, man, that, on the whole, it is better not to force his despotism on his fellow-creatures. Yet, human nature has not changed in the least, and where man has full sway, he is as much a tyrant to-day as he was five hundred years ago. Nations have been emancipated, but the kingdom of which the small boy is a subject remains what it always was. Nature, who is a well-meaning blunderer, has tried to set things right, first by planting some natural affection for his small boy into the stony heart of the parent, and, second, by making the small boy himself an optimist. Happily, there is always a silver lining to the cloud that hovers over the small boy, even when the cane is descending upon him. Trifles please the poor little fellow and help him to forget the gloom which surrounds him. Coventry Patmore, in that most touching poem, "The Toys," tells of a father who struck his motherless son, and sent him weeping to bed, and, being tardily remorseful, the father looked at the sleeping boy, whose undried tears were still on his cheek, and found that before going to sleep the stricken lad had arranged his trivial toys, all the cherished possessions of his pocket, so that his eyes might rest on them "to comfort his sad heart."

* * * *

But the future small boy will have still more trouble.

The small boy does not gain much when he exchanges the tyranny of the home for the tyranny of the school. The schoolmaster is naturally a despot, but he is a despot, limited. To make up for any advantages accruing from the master's limitations, the urchin has to put up with the bullying of the big boy. Possibly there are teachers who have human feelings, as far as the small boy is concerned. We read of such persons in books like "Tom Brown's Schooldays," but it must not be forgotten that these books are works of fiction. The lad who wrote that his master was a beast, but a just beast, may not have been exceptionally lucky, but it is sad to think that the small boy often comes under the dominion of beasts who are not just. But even if masters were all that could be desired, think of the amount of perfectly useless knowledge that a small boy is expected to acquire. How happy was the small boy of 1065 compared with the small boy of 1893. When William the Conqueror, with a man's usual heedlessness of the comfort of small boys, came over in 1066 and popularised that date, he inaugurated a long succession of useless dates that the small boy is compelled to learn. Every monarch has had four figures attached to him, like a picture in an exhibition. Yet was there ever a man stopped in the streets of London, and suddenly confronted with the question, "What year did Henry

VIII. come to the throne?" Certainly not. A man would be considered insane who expected any rational being to burden his mind with such trivialities. Yet the small boy is caned if he doesn't know. The only consolation I can offer the unfortunate small boy of to-day is that it will be ever so much worse for the small boy born 3000 years from now. Every day, objectionable and thoughtless men are discovering new things. Then dates will keep accumulating just as they have always been in the habit of doing. Possibly a new specimen of that detestable type of humanity, Euclid, will arise, and perhaps some conscienceless villain may invent a more complicated system of mathematics than algebra. You never can tell what may happen in 3000 years. So the small boy of 1893 may congratulate himself that he is not the small boy of 4893.

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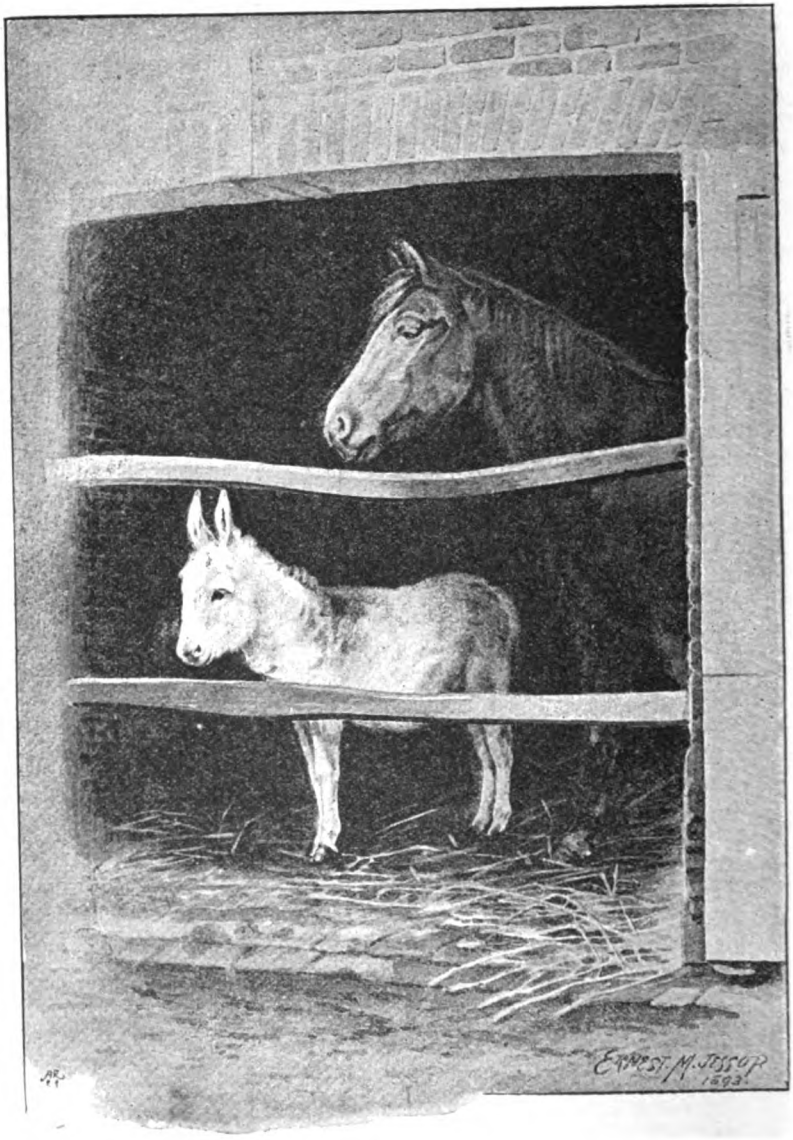
Mrs. Fenwick Miller thinks it depends upon the parents.

Childhood ought to be the happiest period of humanity's course; for children are free from the two great sources of grief and wretchedness—the struggle for money and the consciousness of sex. The children of the poor know a want of many comforts, but this is not a source of unhappiness. Absolute necessities of life, the only true wants of childhood, are so few, and all that is really needed by anybody apart from custom or imagination is so cheap, that I do not think that more than a small minority of children are unhappy from actual want. But we, their elders, painfully and acutely want a thousand things because we have tasted them, or because we have imaginations developed to fancy effectively how we should enjoy them; and then we must needs try to get them, and make ourselves wretched in the furious effort after satisfying our desires, and more wretched still because we don't fully succeed. If we could take life as children in this respect, actively wanting only absolute necessaries, and not having to ourselves strive for even the money by which that minimum of wants is to be supplied, would not most of our troubles of this actual moment vanish? Those that remained, would they not nearly all (given health) hang on the tragic fact of sex? Oh, that garden of Gethsemane of humanity, with its blighted seedlings and its blasted blossoms! How keen are its sorrows of desires ungratified and desires satiated—its cruel losses and its yet more cruel relics that *will* remain. Oh, that dreadful fact of sex, with its emotional agonies, its moral problems, its intellectual interruptions, its social burdens, and only too often its physical pangs—if we were rid, as children are, of all that, and of the struggle for means to meet the daily material wants, should we not be fairly happy? Then childhood, free of all this, must needs be the happiest time of life!



CHESTNUT CHARGER OF THE LATE EMPEROR FREDERIC OF GERMANY, AND "NINETTE," THE PRINCESS VICTORIA'S LITTLE WHITE DONKEY.

No. I.—THE QUEEN'S ANIMALS.

By G. B. Burgin and E. M. Jessop.
Illustrations by E. M. Jessop.

THE February wind blows keenly, as we lean from the window of our railway carriage, and watch dismantled house-boats, drawn up on the river bank just outside Windsor, being prepared for the forthcoming season. Some Eton boys—it is evidently a holiday—stand looking on with lively interest. Several people get out of the train, walk into the quaint old-fashioned street, and disappear. We follow them, charter a hansom, and are driven along a picturesque road in the direction of the late Prince Consort's Shaw Farm. This road is almost deserted, save for half-a-dozen cavalrymen who come riding down it, their brilliant red uniforms lighting up the dull air through which the sunlight vainly endeavours to struggle. Their horses are bespattered with mud; there is mud everywhere—a thick, glutinous mud; but when we enter the precincts of the Shaw Farm everything gives place to an ordered and dainty neatness which is thoroughly characteristic of the Royal domains.

We are received by Mr. W. Tait, the Queen's Land Steward at Windsor, whose handsome stalwart figure is so well known to all leading agriculturists, and conducted to a natty little office decorated with water-colour drawings of prize cattle, and various other reminiscences of past triumphs. Mr. Tait's drawing-room, in common with those of his *confrères* at Windsor, is embellished by various signed portraits of Her Majesty and the Royal family.

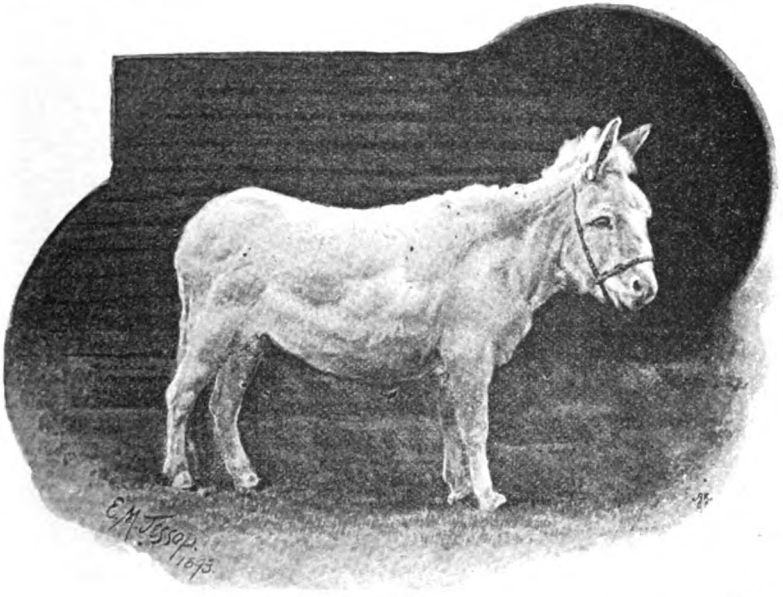
From here, we cross the road and enter a stable where two beautiful old grey carriage horses are being prepared by one of the

farm hands for our inspection, to a continuous accompaniment of sibilant ostler language. They have evidently been running wild in the park for some time; each white coat is stained with mud, and burrs stick tenaciously to their long tails. An attendant at the farm is rubbing them down, talking to them, and making them generally presentable. He is evidently on good terms with his charges, for one playfully nibbles his broad back, whilst the other tries to steal his red pocket-handkerchief. "Flora" and "Alma" were presented to Her Majesty by the late King Victor Emanuel of Italy. They are about fourteen hands high, tremendously powerful, and beautifully shaped. One of them has also been used to draw the Queen's chair about the grounds; but they are both now regarded as honoured pensioners, and do no work at all.

The kindliness and affection with which Her Majesty speaks of favourite animals in her various writings may well assure us that in the midst of state and family cares, manifold though they be, her old pets, even after death, are not forgotten. Of this we have evidence later on.

The next shed to that of the old greys is occupied by a magnificent chestnut charger over seventeen hands high, once the property of the late Emperor Frederic of Germany. In appearance, this charger is as fresh and vigorous as a horse of five. It was given by the Emperor to Prince Christian, who rode it for four years. The charger has a sprightly, though somewhat incongruous, companion in the shape of "Ninette," a little white donkey which was purchased at Grasse by Her Majesty, and presented to the Princess Victoria of Connaught, for whose use it is now being broken in. Directly the donkey is taken out of the stable for educational purposes, the charger becomes restless and unhappy, races round the paddock attached to his loose box in evident distress, and refuses to be comforted until his beautiful little companion returns. Then he playfully nibbles her back, joyfully flings up his heels, and careers wildly round the paddock, neighing shrilly as he goes, his long tail floating in the breeze. What will happen when "Ninette" leaves her companion it is difficult to say. At present she takes little notice of this exuberant display of affection, beyond running beneath the charger's belly, and playfully trying to plant her tiny heels in his lofty side. When they have been twice round the paddock, "Ninette" plodding gamely on, a long way in the rear, the couple halt at the shed entrance, and look at us with exuberant curiosity, the donkey's long ears shooting backwards and forwards with great rapidity.

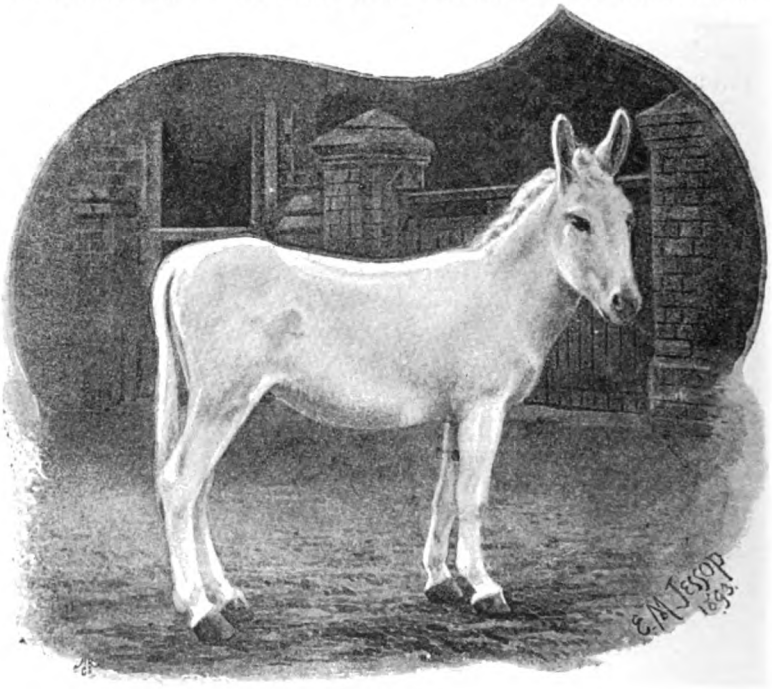
After inspecting this somewhat incongruous couple, we are taken to another stable to see "Jenny," a white donkey, twenty-five years old. "Jenny" belongs to the Queen, and was bred at Virginia Water. Her Majesty saw "Jenny" when she was a foal, had her brought to Windsor and trained, and there the docile old animal has remained ever since. She is pure white in colour, with large, light, expressive grey eyes. One peculiarity about her is an enormous flat back, soft and almost as wide as a moderate-sized feather bed. A handsome chestnut foal is temporarily quartered with her. This foal was bred from a mare belonging to the late Mr. John Brown, and promises to grow into a very beautiful animal.



"JENNY."

"Jenny," although rather reserved, affably condescends to partake of a biscuit, pensively twitching her long ears after us as we depart along the road leading to the Royal dairy. As we leave the trimly built and picturesque outbuildings there is a brave burst of sunshine; chaffinches "chink-chink" in the trees around, producing a sharp, clear sound as if two pebbles were struck against each other; rooks sail majestically overhead, their sentinels, posted in the trees around, giving notice of our approach; and the pale petals of a rathe primrose gleam shyly out from a

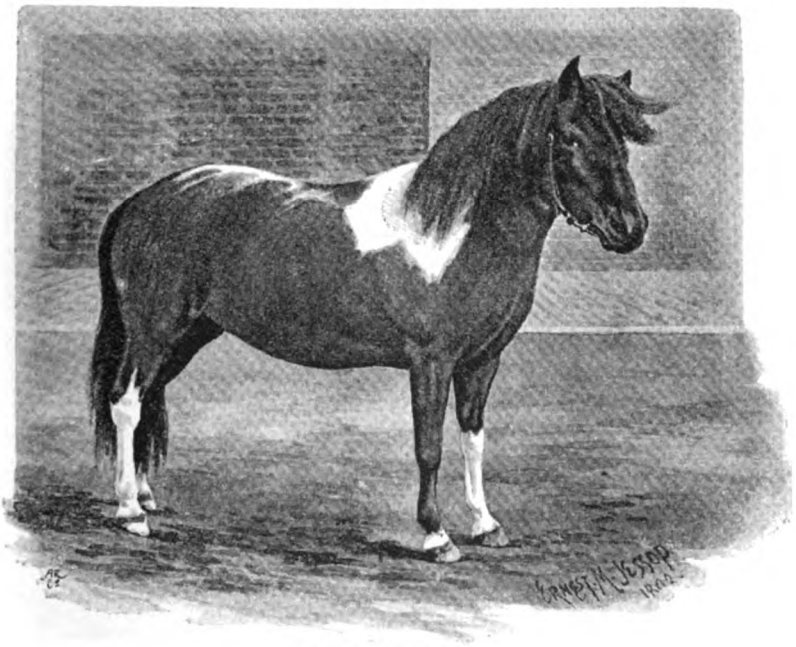
sheltering hedge. The park is filled with Scotch cattle with beautiful heads and matted, shaggy hides. In the next paddock a handsome Jersey cow thrusts her head over the intervening rails and licks the shaggy frontlet of a small dun bull, who gives a gentle low of satisfaction, and endeavours to follow us as we pass through the gate in the direction of the Queen's dairy. At this section of the farm, in the buildings, we find "Tewfik," a very fine white Egyptian donkey, with large black eyes and tremendous ears. He is one of those enormous asses which are so



"TEWFIK."

greatly esteemed in the East for their powers of endurance. It is a curious fact that a donkey of this kind will do as much work as a horse, last twice the time on a long march, and never break down. "Tewfik" was purchased by Lord Wolseley in Cairo, and sent to England, gay with magnificent Oriental trappings, and clipped all over in most extraordinary patterns, resembling Greek architectural ornaments. These patterns are a source of great trouble to the unsophisticated traveller in the East. He learns one side of his donkey by heart, and never thinks of looking at the

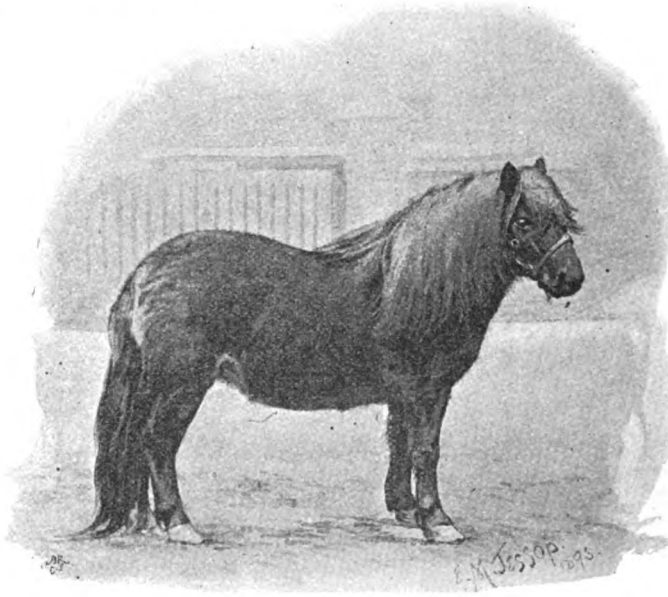
other; consequently, when he sees the hitherto unknown side of the animal, he is inclined to think that some wight has been playing a practical joke, and substituted a different beast for the one he has bestridden. "Tewfik" was much admired at the Jubilee Agricultural Show in Windsor Great Park, and seems really a very amiable, well-mannered, aristocratic animal. He is delighted to see us, and prefers sweet biscuits to plain. Indeed, it is with regret that he watches us depart. His long mobile ears shoot out from the stable door as he endeavours to follow us into the box of his



"THE SKEWBALD"

neighbour, a dainty Shetland pony, some three feet six inches high, which is usually known as "The Skewbald." This diminutive little lady welcomes us in the most charming manner, and is as frolicsome as a kitten, romping about and playing all sorts of tricks. Her mission in life, besides being everyone's pet, is to draw a small two-wheeled cart for Her Majesty's grandchildren. The dainty, trim, little brown-and-white beauty possesses enormous strength, and takes existence very philosophically. The first time she was put into harness she acted as if

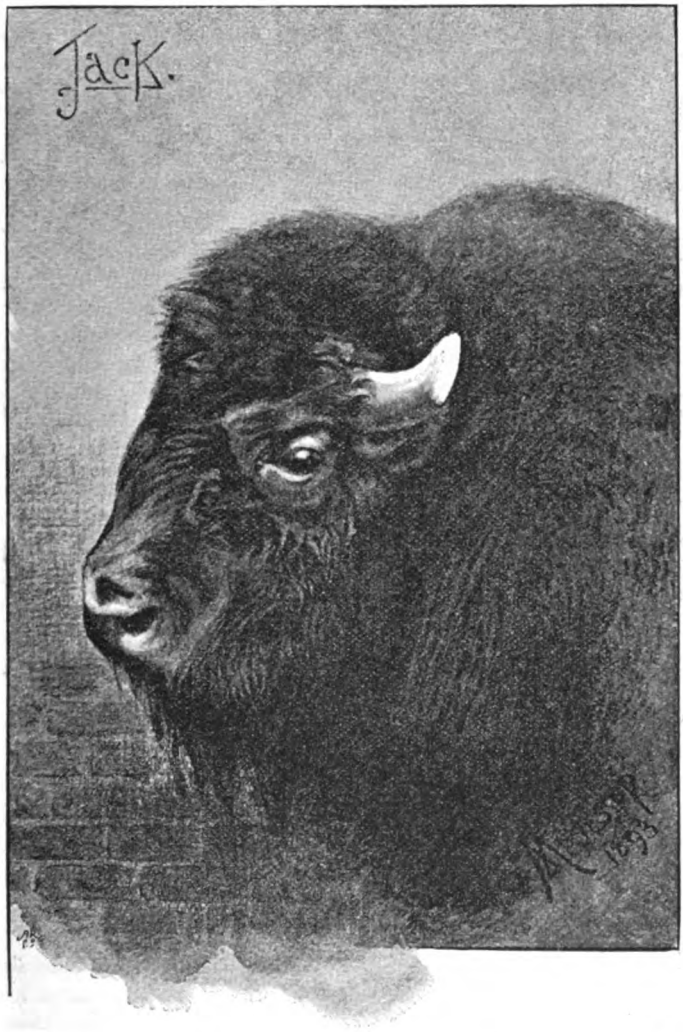
she had been accustomed to it all her life, and never required the slightest breaking in. There is another Shetland pony in one of the neighbouring paddocks, but she is dark brown in colour, and, with her long-flowing mane and tail, looks like a miniature carthorse. Like most of Her Majesty's animals, she is fond of society, and objects to be separated from a large handsome grey donkey which was bought on one of the Continental journeys, and now occupies the same paddock as the Shetland. In order to take the pony's portrait comfortably, it was found necessary to invite the donkey to be present as a spectator.



THE SHETLAND MARE.

The next pet to be inspected is an animal which most people would prefer to cultivate at a distance, being none other than the enormous bison named "Jack," a magnificent specimen of his race, who was obtained in exchange from the Zoological Society. The Canadian grew savage, and had to be sent away. "Jack," in spite of his immense strength, is of a very peaceful, almost timorous, disposition. Strictly speaking, he can hardly be called a pet, as the artist prudently takes his likeness from behind a high wall. All friendly overtures to this last of his race are vain. He remains pensively gazing at the opposite wall, a tear trickling down

his broad nose. Even the joyful bellow of his next-door neighbour, a half-grown Jersey bull, fails to attract his attention, although the animal, as it recognises its keeper's step, climbs half over the wall to be fondled.



Here we must not pass without examination some most beautiful little Jersey calves with silky coats and great wondering eyes, which look as if the world was a charming mystery to them.

In the next stall to the Jersey bull stands an eccentric-looking little animal called "Sanger," a pony presented to Her Majesty by the well-known circus proprietor of that name. "Sanger" is now nine months old. This strange little animal's breed is practically unknown, and his appearance most eccentric; indeed, his legs show a tendency to stride to all points of the compass. In colour he is cream; his eyes are grey, with pink lids; and he has white eyelashes like an albino. His manners are not demonstrative, but coldly courteous.

"SANGER."

Outside, in the park, is another pet, which was presented to Her Majesty by Lord Wolseley, a peculiarly tall, deerlike-looking animal, a Zulu cow, bred from a bull which was originally the property of Dabulamanzi, Cetewayo's brother. Cetewayo, curiously enough, when paying a visit to the Shaw Farm, saw his brother's cattle, but did not appear to admire them much when compared with the English. A well-bred English cow has four times the substance and breeding of her Zulu sister.

Attention may also be called to some magnificent red Spanish cattle, whose noble heads and gigantic horns are in themselves a study for the artist.

It should be mentioned here that when Her Majesty drives through the private road which leads from the Castle past the kennels and dairy to the Shaw Farm, she likes to see the animals as they come up to the railings, and is thus able to observe how former favourites bear the burden of their years. The Queen names most of them herself, and never forgets an old friend.

Before going on to the kennels, by permission of the courteous manageress, we enter the beautiful Royal dairy, which was built under the direction of His Royal Highness the late Prince Consort in the twenty-first year of Her Majesty's reign. It is more like an apartment in fairyland than a dairy. The walls and ceiling are composed of exquisitely shaded Minton tiles, the dairy itself being about forty-five feet long and thirty wide. Long marble tables run right round the sides and up the centre. On these tables are some 90 white earthenware pans, each of which contains about seven quarts of milk. The butter is sent to Osborne every day, and averages about twenty pounds weight in winter and forty in summer. A small supply for the Queen's own breakfast table is also made in a special churn every morning.

Around the walls of the dairy are medallions of the Royal family, with the monogram V.R. between. At each end of the dairy stands a beautiful fountain; there is also one at the side. All these fountains came from the Exhibition of 1851; the design is a stork supporting a lily leaf into which the water falls. The roof is supported by three pairs of arched pillars, and the windows are double, the inner set being stained with designs of Tudor roses, hawthorn, primroses, white marguerites, the rose, shamrock, thistle, and Scotch harebell. The outer windows are plain glass. Beyond the glass is another window of wire gauze, so minute that in hot weather both windows can be thrown open to admit the air, and yet all intrusive insects kept at a distance. The Royal herd generally consists of about fifty cows when they are all in milk, principally shorthorns and Jerseys, twenty-five of each. Last year there were fifty-four cows in milk, but the number usually averages about fifty.

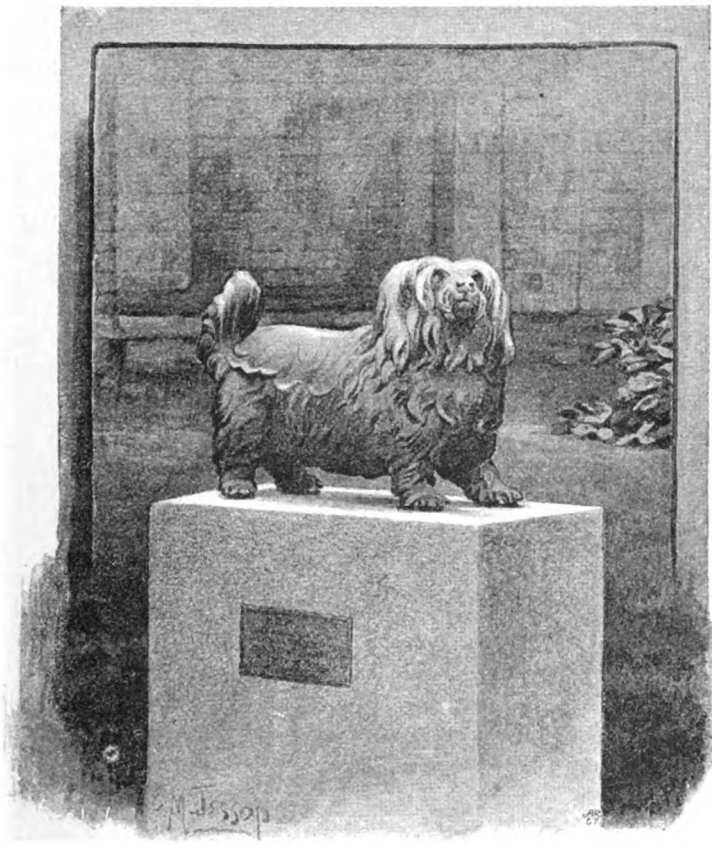
The recesses in the dairy walls are filled with lovely old Crown Derby and Worcester, together with a few Oriental china plates and dishes. There is also a dish bearing the inscription, "Chamberlain, Worcester, Manufacturer to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent." Close to the dairy, stands an apartment devoted to churns and huge milk-cans. Each milk-can bears the following inscription on the top:—

V. R.

Home Park, Windsor.

After exhausting the wonders of the Royal dairy, we pass out into the sunshine once more, but, before leaving the shrubbery, notice two little monuments to the memory of long-deceased favourites, the inscriptions on which are as follows :—

BOY,
Died February 20, 1862,
Aged five years.
The favourite and faithful dog of the Queen and Prince Consort.



BOZ,

The favourite Scottish terrier of the Duchess of Kent, to whom he had been given in 1857 by the Queen and Prince Consort.

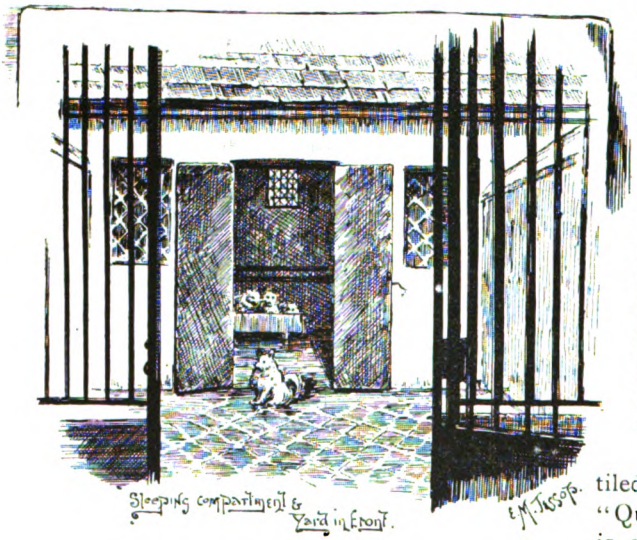
On March 16, 1861, he was taken back, and from that time till he died, Oct. 26, 1864, remained the faithful dog of the Queen.

Surely, two touching and blameless little records!

Leaving these pets to their well-earned rest, we walk along the trimly-kept private road leading to the Royal kennels. Here, when Her Majesty drives along, she can see the Spanish oxen and other pets as they come up to the railings and peer curiously over, the

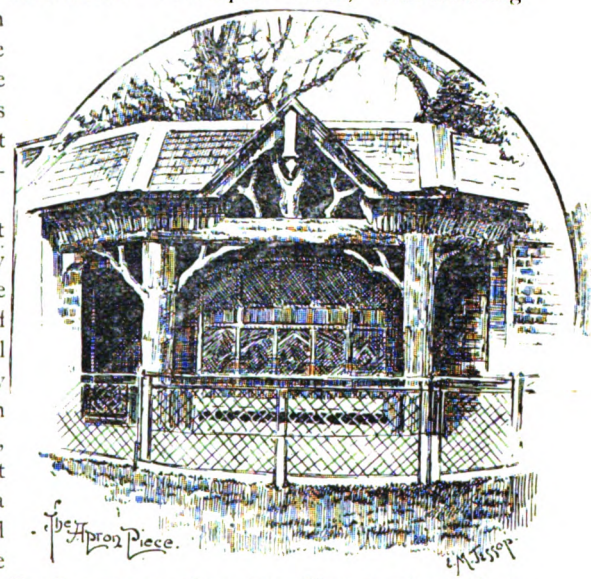
long horns of the oxen especially making a formidable show which is entirely belied by their peaceful disposition.

At the Royal kennels we are received by Mr. Hugh Brown, the manager, and his able assistant, Mr. Hill, and shown into the apartment which is sometimes occupied by Her Majesty when visiting the kennels. It is a quaint, medium-sized room, with old oak rafters and oak furniture, comfortable chairs and foot-rests predominating. The curtains are a warm, deep red, the carpet to match, and a couple of little oak tables occupy the centre of the room. But the unique feature about this apartment is the number of dog portraits on the walls. There are dogs of every race, shape and colour; dogs large and small; dogs lying down or standing up; dogs in oils, dogs in watercolours; all of them labelled with the animal's name and the artist who painted it. One or two special favourites have a lock of their hair let into the woodwork of the frame.



Outside, the tiled walk called the "Queen's Verandah" is covered over as a protection against the weather. Her Majesty is accustomed to walk up and down here, and inspect the various occupants. There are several dogs in every compartment. Each front yard measures ten feet by twelve; the sleeping compartment is ten feet by ten. The wall in front stands nearly three feet high, and has a rail on the top. Each yard is paved with red and blue tiles. In the sleeping compartments, which are warmed by hot-water pipes, are benches raised about a foot from the ground. Facing the "Collie Court," as it is called, is a large paddock which contains the bath—a curious aperture in the ground, with sloping sides, so that a dog can run down, swim through the middle, and walk up again on the

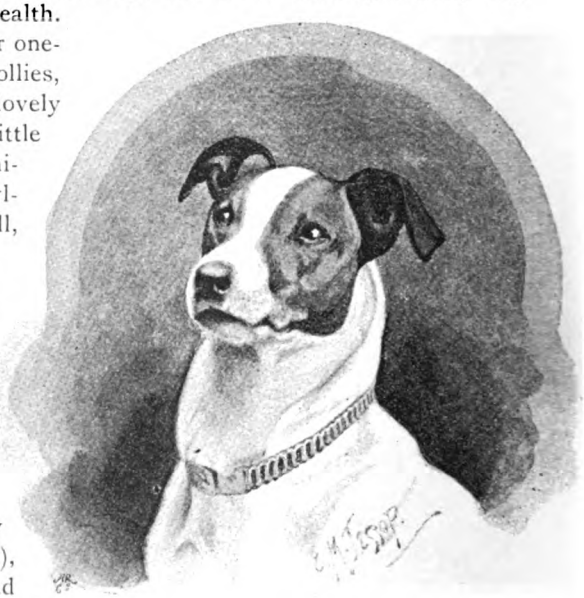
other side. The sides of this bath are lined with little round stones. There is also an umbrella-shaped structure of wood, under which the dogs can lie and sun themselves after the bath. Near the road is a curious looking seat called "The Apron Piece," with a railing in front. The Queen sometimes sits here and watches the gambols of the dogs when they are let loose in the paddock.



There does not appear to be any hard and fast rule as to the housing of the dogs. It all depends how they agree with each other. For instance, in one compartment will be found a collie, Spitz, and dachshund; in the next, three Spitzes and a pug; then two Skye terriers, three pugs, one dachshund; then two lovely white collies; then one solitary collie whose coat is out of order, and who comes up with big, beseeching eyes, as if imploring us to put an end to her solitude. The most attractive sight is, of course, the twelve or thirteen beautiful collies in one big compartment. In all there are about fifty-five dogs, fifty-four of whom are in robust health, the hospital containing one whippet. A beautiful little black Pomeranian "Zeela" inhabits a huge cage in solitary state, and barks herself all over it at once. In the paddock outside her cage are four beautiful black and tan collie pups, all eager for a romp.

Every dog in the Queen's kennels is exercised twice a day, morning and afternoon. The little dogs generally go out first, and then give place to the big ones. Feeding time for the whole establishment is four o'clock in the afternoon, but during very cold weather each animal is given some dry biscuit every morning. The food is prepared in a kitchen reserved expressly for this purpose, and consists of soaked biscuits, vegetables, meat, bullock's head, pluck, and sometimes a little beef. Oatmeal is also added

to this *olla podrida*. The dogs are all in hard condition, and look the picture of health. It is difficult to tear oneself away from the collies, especially the two lovely white ones and the little buff-coated Pomeranians, with tightly curling tails and small, sharp ears.



"SPOT."

Her Majesty's love for dogs is so well known that it would be superfluous to dwell upon such a topic. Wherever the Queen goes, she is accompanied by "Spot" (a fox-terrier), "Roy" (a black and tan collie), and a lovely little brown Spitz called "Marco." Her favourite dogs are collies, and she possesses a magnificent specimen in "Darnley," who is now being exhibited at the Agricultural Hall dog show. "Darnley" is a beautiful black and tan in colour, with heavy white ruff. He has a most curious habit, inherited from his father, of wrinkling up the skin of his nose and showing all his teeth when pleased. Another animal away at the show is the little eight-months old Skye terrier, "Rona." "Rona" is iron-grey in colour, has a very long body, and is extremely intelligent and good natured.

"ROY."

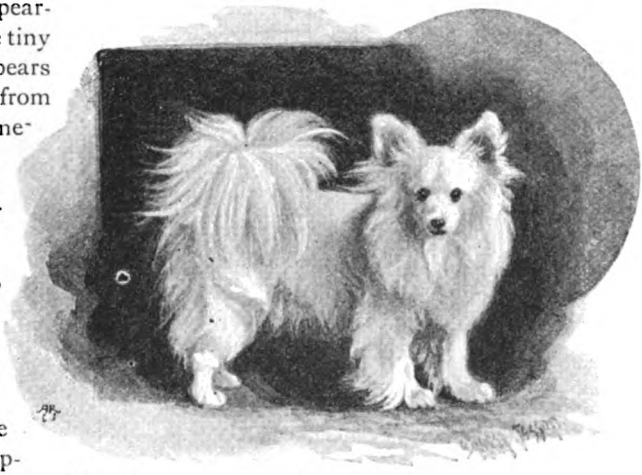
On one of the artist's visits,

"Beppo," a white Pomeranian, was brought out to have his portrait taken. Dog-like, he at once pretended, when required to sit still, that it was an excessively difficult operation causing great physical discomfort. Talking did not interest him, shaking of keys and rolling of coppers had lost their charm; in fact, tail between legs, he voted existence a mistake. Just then, up strolled dear little "Rona," and with bright intelligent eyes seemingly enquired into the matter. In a few seconds everything was put right again. The sun once more shone; and the portrait was taken.

"MARCO."

Surely, these little Skyes are the most lovable and intelligent of all dogs. To any one who has read "Rab and his Friends," however, such a remark is unnecessary.

In appearance, little tiny "Gena" bears the palm from all the Pomeranians. She is one mass of white, silky wool, and has the most charming manners. With one tiny paw uplifted she immediately decides that artists are not as photographers, and may be trusted to take portraits without the intervention of any snappy and nerve-shaking apparatus. "Gena" and "Glen," an old black and tan collie, live in the house, the inseparable companions of genial Mrs. Hugh Brown.



"BEPPO."

The late Prince Consort's favourite dogs were dachshunds, a specimen of which invariably accompanied him on his walks. The Prince of Wales favours the odd-looking bassets, of which he has many fine specimens.

"GENA."

But the kennels, with all their joyousness, have sad little tragedies at times. For instance, after the death of the late well-loved Emperor Frederick, two of his favourite Italian dogs, charming creatures, something like Italian greyhounds, were sent to Her Majesty, but, unfortunately, did not long survive their illustrious master. Many old pets have tombs in various parts of the Royal domain. Among others which may be seen on the Slopes

"GENA."

is that of "Sharp," a handsome collie, who lies, as in life, guarding the Queen's glove.

It is related of "Sharp" that he was greatly attached to the late Mr. John Brown, whose room he jealously guarded. If, by chance, strangers entered during Mr. Brown's absence they were not allowed to leave until his return, and under no circumstances must anything be taken from the room while "Sharp" was on guard. A housemaid, indeed, once picked up some little article with the intention of putting it on the table, and the dog, although he knew her well, refused to allow her to leave the room.

In noticing the display of prize certificates won by the dogs, we hear of another instance of Her Majesty's thoughtfulness for her pets. Although frequently exhibited for the pleasure of her subjects, they are never allowed to pass the night from home, being taken to and from the place of exhibition each day by their careful guardians, Messrs. Brown and Hill.

After an inspection of the well-kept stud-book, we at last turn to leave the happy scene, a process viewed, evidently, with much relief by a funny little, black-faced pug, to whom our presence and proceedings throughout have seemingly caused the greatest astonishment.

But we have still Her Majesty's pets at the stables to look at before returning to town, so we walk blithely down Herne's Walk toward the Castle, putting up a huge hare, who leisurely retreats as if feeling secure within the Royal precincts. As we go down the walk, we notice a comparatively juvenile-looking tree in marked contrast to the giants around. At its foot is the following inscription:—

This tree was planted by
Her Majesty Queen Victoria
To mark the spot where Herne's Oak stood.
The old tree was blown down
August 31st, 1863.

There is an old tale goes that Herne the Hunter,
Some time a keeper here in Windsor Forest,
Doth all the winter time at still midnight
Walk round about an oak.

—*Shakespeare.*

After lunch at the nearest hostelry, we walk up to the Castle, and enquire for Mr. John Manning, the superintendent of the Royal mews. Mr. Manning first takes us to the harness-room, a well-lighted, pleasant building with sanded floor, a stove burning brightly in the centre of the room, and all round the walls harness and saddles symmetrically arranged. The first set of double harness which he shows us is seldom used, and is made out of black leather, richly embroidered in designs of the Royal Arms, &c., with split porcupine quills, the work of some Tyrolese artists who visited this country many years ago.

Next to the porcupine harness hangs a set of Russian leather sledge harness, beautifully mounted with silver, and as soft as a kid glove. High over the saddles (the saddles are hung up with what is known as a crutch) are the collars of the Queen's carriage horses. In order to prevent confusion, the name of each horse is printed above the collar, *i.e.*, "True," "Ronald," "Sheridan," "Beau," "Force," "Belfast," "Middy," "Bashful," and so on.

Next door to the harness-room is a huge coach-house containing the Queen's carriages, among them being a landau, sociable, driving landau, waggonette, and a driving phaeton with curtains, which was much used by the late Prince Consort. In one corner is a covered perambulator belonging to Her Majesty's grandchildren, and close to it stands the vehicle which is generally known as "the Queen's Chair," although it is in reality a little four-wheeled carriage, with rubber tyres, and a low step, the interior lining and cushions being a plain dark blue in colour.

'JACQUOT."

This vehicle is much used by Her Majesty when driving about the grounds, and is drawn by an exceedingly strong, handsome donkey called "Jacquot," in colour a very dark brown, with white nose and curiously knotted tail. "Jacquot," who is a very intelligent animal, with a rather strong objection to work, and a great love of good living, accompanies Her Majesty whenever she goes abroad, his next destination being Florence.

In an adjoining paddock stands a nice, pleasant-looking grey donkey, who munches an apple philosophically while having his portrait drawn. He is a great favourite, the son of Egyptian "Tewfik," and takes his share of garden work and in carrying the Queen's grandchildren.

The adjoining stable contains eighteen harness horses, most of them grey. The stables themselves are beautifully kept, one groom being generally allowed to every two horses. At the edge of each stall is an artistically plaited border of straw. Close by is the riding school, a handsome building sixty-three yards in length and eighteen yards wide. The roof is supported on handsome oak brackets; at one end is a balcony where it is said Her Majesty and the late Prince Consort were accustomed to sit and watch the horses being exercised. In this gallery are medallions of favourite horses, the frames containing locks of their hair. The riding school is lit with gas, and the lower part of the walls lined with kamptulicon, which never wears out, and prevents a horse being much injured should he by any chance kick or fall against it. The centre of the tan-covered floor is occupied by a mounting block.

A SON OF "TEWFIK."

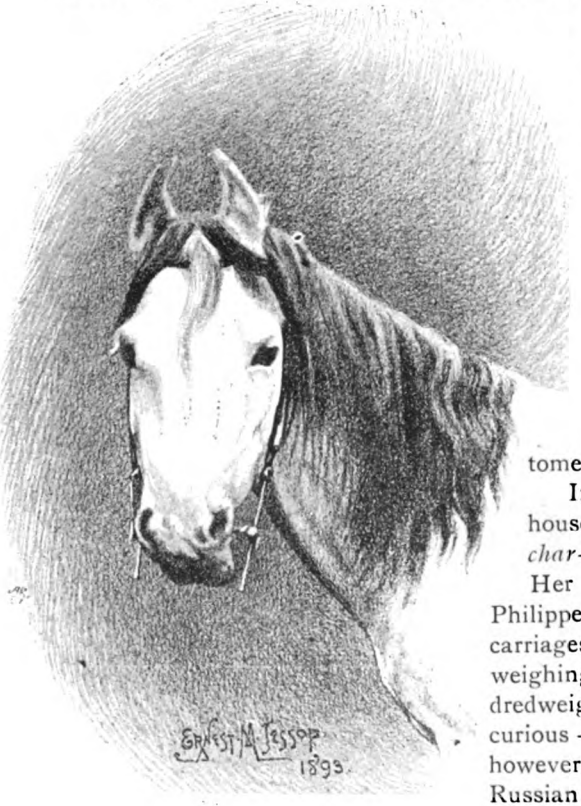
This school is occasionally used for circus performances, and, splendidly decorated, was the scene of the grand entertainment given to the Belgian volunteers some years since.

In a solitary loose box, warmly wrapped in rugs, her own natural coat being like very thick, soft, black plush, placidly stands "Jessie," the Queen's favourite old riding-mare. With her splendid coat, silky mane and tail, lofty crest, and soft mild eyes, she looks indeed worthy of her Royal mistress. "Jessie's" pedigree is unknown to us, but she was bred near Balmoral. She is about fifteen hands three inches in height, black as a coal, and with peculiar white markings on forehead and back. She is now twenty-six or twenty-seven years old, and, until within the last twelve months, has carried Her Majesty for many years. The Queen is very fond of "Jessie," who, although now, from old age, past work, is invariably sent to the Castle for inspection when Her Majesty is at Windsor.

A very different-looking animal is the grey Arab in the next stable. This magnificent horse was presented to Her Majesty by the Thakore of Morvi, and does not bear the best of stable reputations, but when mounted he is docility itself, and a very

faithful worker. The grey's wardrobe, when he came to England, consisted of the following gorgeous trappings:—Saddle of red and green cloth, under felt, pad for saddle, embroidered saddle-cloth, embroidered bridle, plume, hood in cloth of gold, leg-ring and pad, embroidered neckpiece, embroidered quarter-piece, four

bunches of woollen tassels, and a silk scarf. Arrayed in all this splendour and ridden by a native attendant, he was brought into the Grand Quadrangle at Windsor to be presented to Her Majesty with due and appropriate ceremonies. He is tall for an Arab, with whitish body, dark grey legs, pink muzzle, and silky black mane, which hangs over the near or left side of his neck. In the next stable stand twelve beautiful brougham horses, ranging from dark brown to light chestnut in colour. Next to the brougham horses are four brown ponies, about fourteen hands high. These animals were all bred from a pony called "Beatrice," which the Princess Beatrice was accustomed to ride.



THE GREY ARAB.

In the next carriage-house stands a gorgeous *char-à-banc*, presented to Her Majesty by Louis Philippe. Then come the carriages of the household, weighing about fifteen hundredweight each. The most curious-looking vehicles, however, are the long-shafted Russian droschkies, meant to be drawn by three horses abreast.

In another carriage-house is a vehicle replete with historical and pathetic interest. This is none other than the post-chaise in which Her Majesty and the late Prince Consort travelled all through Germany about seven years after their marriage. It is fitted up with a writing-case, and all sorts of conveniences, and hung on C springs.

The cheerful tap-tap of a hammer, and a keen, pungent scent as of something burning, warn us that we are in the vicinity of the Royal smithy. A handsome grey carriage-horse is being shod, one hoof doubled up between the farrier's legs, as that worthy, with quick taps, drives in a long nail, and makes the shoe fast.

The Royal mews, which were built in 1841, cover a space of no less than four acres of ground, and, together with those at Buckingham Palace, are under the able supervision of Colonel Sir George Maude, K.C.B., R.A., &c., who also purchases most of Her Majesty's horses. It is no light testimonial to the care of their management when we hear that, although sometimes as many as one hundred horses are accommodated at Windsor, the veterinary surgeon's account only amounts for the year to a most insignificant sum.

We cannot take our leave, for the present, of the Royal pets without again returning our hearty thanks to all with whom we have been brought in contact, for their kindness, courtesy, and desire to assist us in our mission. To all loyal subjects who wish to see a model of a good Queen's home we can give no better advice than to go to Royal Windsor.

[The Editors of *The Idler* return their most sincere thanks to General Sir Henry Ponsonby, G.C.B., &c., &c., for his kind correction and revision of the above article.]

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

HEINRIK IBSEN.

"We are all of us ghosts. . . It is not only what we have inherited from our father and mother that 'walks' in us. It is all sorts of dead ideas, and lifeless old beliefs, and so forth. They have no vitality, but they cling to us all the same, and we can't get rid of them. Whenever I take up a newspaper I seem to see ghosts gliding between the lines. There must be ghosts all the country over, as thick as the sands of the sea."—Ibsen.

The Reclamation of Joe Hollends.

By Robert Barr.

Illustrations by J. Greig.

THE public-houses of Burwell Road—and there were many of them for the length of the street—were rather proud of Joe Hollends. He was a perfected specimen of the work a pub produces. He was probably the most persistent drunkard the Road possessed, and the periodical gathering in of Joe by the police was one of the stock sights of the street. Many of the inhabitants could be taken to the station by one policeman; some required two; but Joe's average was four. He had been heard to boast that on one occasion he had been accompanied to the station by seven bobbies, but that was before the force had studied Joe and got him down to his correct mathematical equivalent. Now they tripped him up, a policeman taking one kicking leg and another the other, while the remaining two attended to the upper part of his body. Thus they carried him, followed by an admiring crowd, and watched by other envious drunkards who had to content themselves with a single officer when they went on a similar spree. Sometimes Joe managed to place a kick where it would do the most good against the stomach of a policeman, and when the officer rolled over there was for a few moments a renewal of the fight, silent on the part of the men and vociferous on the part of the drunkard, who had a fine flow of abusive language. Then the procession went on again. It was perfectly useless to put Joe on the police ambulance, for it required two men to sit on him while in transit, and the barrow is not made to stand such a load.

"THE WRONGS OF THE WORKING MAN."

Of course, when Joe staggered out of the pub and fell in the gutter, the ambulance did its duty, and trundled Joe to his abiding

place, but the real fun occurred when Joe was gathered in during the third stage of his debauch. He passed through the oratorical stage, then the maudlin or sentimental stage, from which he emerged into the fighting stage, when he was usually ejected into the street, where he forthwith began to make Rome howl, and paint the town red. At this point the policeman's whistle sounded, and the force knew Joe was on the warpath, and that duty called them to the fray.

It was believed in the neighbourhood that Joe had been a college man, and this gave him additional standing with his admirers. His eloquence was undoubted, after several glasses varying in number according to the strength of their contents, and a man who had heard the great political speakers of the day admitted that none of them could hold a candle to Joe when he got on the subject of the wrongs of the working man and the tyranny of the capitalist. It was generally understood that Joe might have been anything he liked, and that he was no man's enemy but his own. It was also hinted that he could tell the bigwigs a thing or two if he had been consulted in affairs of State.

One evening, when Joe was slowly progressing as usual, with his feet in the air, towards the station, supported by the requisite number of policemen, and declaiming to the delight of the accompanying crowd, a woman stood with her back to the brick wall, horror-stricken at the sight. She had a pale, refined face, and was dressed in black. Her self-imposed mission was among these people, but she had never seen Joe taken to the station before, and the sight, which was so amusing to the neighbourhood, was shocking to her. She enquired about Joe, and heard the usual story that he was no man's enemy but his own, although they might in justice have added the police. Still, a policeman was hardly looked upon as a human being in that neighbourhood. Miss Johnson reported the case to the committee of the Social League, and took counsel. Then it was that the reclamation of Joe Hollends was determined on.

Joe received Miss Johnson with subdued dignity, and a demeanour that delicately indicated a knowledge on his part of her superiority and his own degradation. He knew how a lady should be treated even if he was a drunkard, as he told his cronies afterwards. Joe was perfectly willing to be reclaimed. Heretofore in his life, no one had ever extended the hand of fellowship to him. Human sympathy was what Joe needed, and precious little he had had of it. There were more kicks than halfpence in this world for

a poor man. The rich did not care what became of the poor; not they—a proposition which Miss Johnson earnestly denied.

It was one of the tenets of the committee that where possible the poor should help the poor. It was resolved to get Joe a decent suit of clothes and endeavour to find him a place where work would enable him to help himself. Miss Johnson went around the neighbourhood and collected pence for the reclamation. Most people were willing to help Joe, although it was generally felt that the Road would be less gay when he took on sober habits. In one room, however, Miss Johnson was refused the penny she pleaded for.

"We cannot spare even a penny," said the woman, whose sickly little boy clung to her skirts. "My husband is just out of work again. He has had only four weeks' work this time."

"'WE CANNOT SPARE EVEN A PENNY.'"

Miss Johnson looked around the room and saw why there was no money. It was quite evident where the earnings of the husband had gone.

The room was much better furnished than the average apartment of the neighbourhood. There were two sets of dishes where one would have been quite sufficient. On the mantelshelf and around the walls were various unnecessary articles which cost money.

Miss Johnson noted all this but said nothing, although she resolved to report it to the committee. In union is strength and in multitude of counsel there is wisdom. Miss Johnson had great faith in the wisdom of the committee.

"How long has your husband been out of work?" she asked.

"Only a few days, but times are very bad and he is afraid he will not get another situation soon."

"What is his trade?"

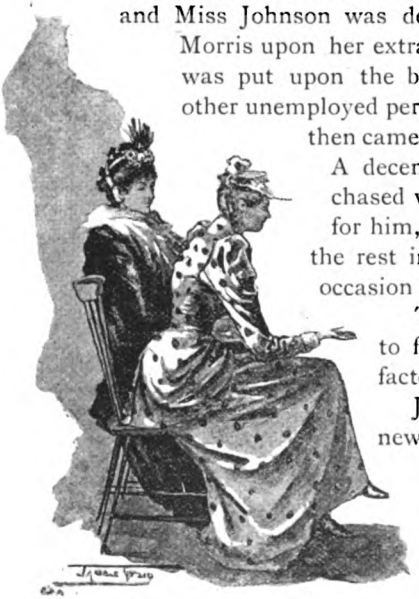
"He is a carpenter and a good workman—sober and steady."

"If you give me his name I will put it down in our books. Perhaps we may be able to help him."

"John Morris is his name."

Miss Johnson wrote it down on her tablets, and when she left the wife felt vaguely grateful for benefits to come.

The facts of the case were reported to the committee, and Miss Johnson was deputed to expostulate with Mrs. Morris upon her extravagance. John Morris's name was put upon the books among the names of many other unemployed persons. The case of Joe Hollends then came up, and elicited much enthusiasm. A decent suit of clothing had been purchased with part of the money collected for him, and it was determined to keep the rest in trust, to be doled out to him as occasion warranted.



'THE LADIES WERE VERY PERSUASIVE."

Two persuasive ladies undertook to find a place for him in one of the factories, if such a thing were possible. Joe felt rather uncomfortable in his new suit of clothes, and seemed to regard the expenditure as, all in all, a waste of good money. He was also disappointed to find that the funds collected were not to be handed over to him in a lump. It was not the money he cared about, he said, but the evident lack of trust. If people had trusted him more, he might have been a better man. Trust and human sympathy were what Joe Hollends needed.

The two persuasive ladies appealed to Mr. Stillwell, the proprietor of a small factory for the making of boxes. They said that if Hollends got a chance they were sure he would reform. Stillwell replied that he had no place for anyone. He had enough to do to keep the men already in his employ. Times were dull in the box business, and he was turning away applicants every day.

who were good workmen and who didn't need to be reformed. However, the ladies were very persuasive, and it is not given to every man to be able to refuse the appeal of a pretty woman, not to mention two of them. Stillwell promised to give Hollends a chance, said he would consult with his foreman, and let the ladies know what could be done.

Joe Hollends did not receive the news of his luck with the enthusiasm that might have been expected. Many a man was tramping London in search of employment and finding none, therefore even the ladies who were so solicitous about Joe's welfare thought he should be thankful that work came unsought. He said he would do his best, which is, when you come to think of it, all that we have a right to expect from any man.

Some days afterwards Jack Morris applied to Mr. Stillwell for a job, but he had no sub-committee of persuasive ladies to plead for him. He would be willing to work half-time or quarter-time for that matter. He had a wife and boy dependent on him. He could show that he was a good workman and he did not drink. Thus did Morris recite his qualifications to the unwilling ears of Stillwell the box maker. As he left the place disheartened with another refusal, he was overtaken by Joe Hollends. Joe was a lover of his fellow-man, and disliked seeing anyone downhearted. He had one infallible cure for dejection. Having just been discharged, he was in high spirits, because his prediction of his own failure as a reformed character, if work were a condition of the reclamation, had just been fulfilled.

"Cheer up, old man," he cried, slapping Morris on the shoulder, "what's the matter? Come and have a drink with me. I've got the money."

"No," said Morris, who knew the professional drunkard but slightly, and did not care for further acquaintance with him, "I want work, not beer."

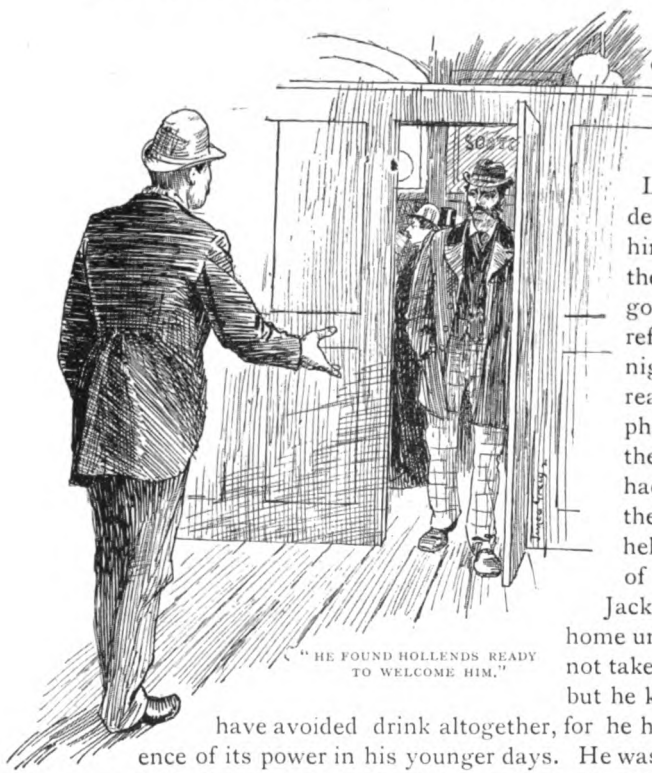
"Every man to his taste. Why don't you ask at the box factory? You can have my job and welcome. The foreman's just discharged me. Said I wouldn't work myself, and kept the men off theirs. Thought I talked too much about capital and labour."

"Do you think I could get your job?"

"Very likely. No harm in trying. If they don't take you on, come into the Red Lion—I'll be there—and have a drop. It'll cheer you up a bit."

Morris appealed in vain to the foreman. They had more men

now in the factory than they needed, he said. So Morris went to the Red Lion, where he found Hollends ready to welcome him. They had several glasses together, and Hollends told him of the efforts of the Social League in the reclamation line, and his doubts of their ultimate success. Hollends seemed to think the ladies of the League were deeply indebted to him for furnishing them with such a good subject for reformation. That night Joe's career reached a triumphant climax, for the four policemen had to appeal to the bystanders for help in the name of the law.



"HE FOUND HOLLENDS READY TO WELCOME HIM."

Jack Morris went home unaided. He had not taken many glasses, but he knew he should have avoided drink altogether, for he had some experience of its power in his younger days. He was, therefore, in a quarrelsome mood, ready to blame everyone but himself.

He found his wife in tears, and saw Miss Johnson sitting there, evidently very miserable.

"What's all this?" asked Morris.

His wife dried her eyes, and said it was nothing. Miss Johnson had been giving her some advice, which she was thankful for. Morris glared at the visitor.

"What have you got to do with us?" he demanded rudely. His wife caught him by the arm, but he angrily tossed aside her hand. Miss Johnson arose, fearing.

"You've no business here. We want none of your advice. You get out of this." Then, impatiently to his wife, who strove to calm him, "Shut up, will you?"

Miss Johnson was afraid he would strike her as she passed him going to the door, but he merely stood there, following her exit with lowering brow.

The terrified lady told her experience to the sympathising members of the committee. She had spoken to Mrs. Morris of her extravagance in buying so many things that were not necessary when her husband had work. She advised the saving of the money. Mrs. Morris had defended her apparent lavish expenditure by saying that there was no possibility of saving money. She bought useful things, and when her husband was out of work

"TOLD HER EXPERIENCE."

she could always get a large percentage of their cost from the pawnbroker. The pawnshop, she had tearfully explained to Miss Johnson, was the only bank of the poor. The idea of the pawnshop as a bank, and not as a place of disgrace, was new to Miss Johnson, but before anything further could be said the husband had come in. One of the committee, who knew more about the district than Miss Johnson, affirmed that there was something to say for the pawnbroker as the banker of the poor. The committee were unanimous in condemning the conduct of Morris, and it says much for the members that, in spite of the provocation one of them had received, they did not take the name of so undeserving a man from their list of the unemployed.

The sad relapse of Joe Hollends next occupied the attention of

the League. His fine had been paid, and he had expressed himself as deeply grieved at his own frailty. If the foreman had been less harsh with him and had given him a chance, things might have been different. It was resolved to send Joe to the seaside so that he might have an opportunity of toning up his system to resist temptation. Joe enjoyed his trip to the sea. He always liked to encounter a new body of police unaccustomed to his methods. He toned up his system so successfully the first day on the sands that he spent the night in the cells.

Little by little, the portable property in the rooms of the Morrises disappeared into the pawnshop. Misfortune, as usual, did not come singly. The small boy was ill, and Morris himself seemed to be unable to resist the temptation of the Red Lion. The unhappy woman took her boy to the parish doctor, who was very busy, but he gave what attention he could to the case. He said all the boy needed was nourishing food and country air. Mrs. Morris sighed, and decided to take the little boy oftener to the park, but the way was long, and he grew weaker day by day.

At last, she succeeded in interesting her husband in the little fellow's condition. He consented to take the boy to the doctor with her.

"The doctor doesn't seem to mind what I say," she complained. "Perhaps he will pay attention to a man."

Morris was not naturally a morose person, but continued disappointment was rapidly making him so. He said nothing, but took the boy in his arms, and, followed by his wife, went to the doctor.

"This boy was here before," said the physician, which tended to show that he had paid more attention to the case than Mrs. Morris thought. "He is very much worse. You will have to take him to the country or he will die."

"How can I send him to the country?" asked Morris, sullenly. "I've been out of work for months."

"Have you friends in the country?"

"No."

"Hasn't your wife any friends in the country who would take her and the lad for a month or so?"

"No."

"Have you anything to pawn?"

"Very little."

"Then I would advise you to pawn everything you own, or sell it if you can, and take the boy on your back and tramp to the

country. You will get work there probably more easily than in the city. Here are ten shillings to help you."

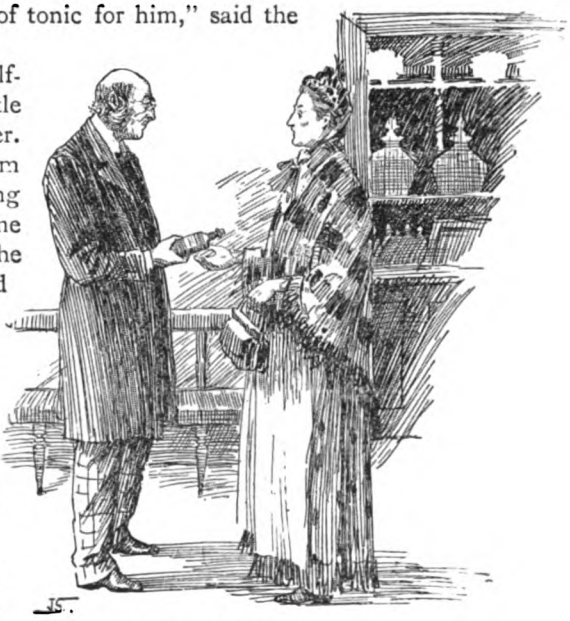
"I don't want your money," said Morris, in a surly tone. "I want work."

"I have no work to give you, so I offer you what I have. I haven't as much of that as I could wish. You are a fool not to take what the gods send."

Morris, without replying, gathered up his son in his arms and departed.

"Here is a bottle of tonic for him," said the doctor to Mrs. Morris.

He placed the half-sovereign on the bottle as he passed it to her. She silently thanked him with her wet eyes, hoping that a time would come when she could repay the money. The doctor had experience enough to know that they were not to be classed among his usual visitors. He was not in the habit of indiscriminately bestowing gold coins.



"'HERE IS A TONIC FOR HIM.'"

It was a dreary journey, and they were a long time shaking off the octopus-like tentacles of the great city, that reached further and further into the country each year, as it it lived on consuming the green fields. Morris walked ahead with the boy on his back, and his wife followed. Neither spoke, and the sick lad did not complain. As they were nearing a village, the boy's head sunk on his father's shoulder. The mother quickened her pace, and came up to them, stroking the head of her sleeping son. Suddenly, she uttered a smothered cry and took the boy in her arms.

"What's the matter?" asked Morris, turning round.

She did not answer, but sat by the roadside with the boy on

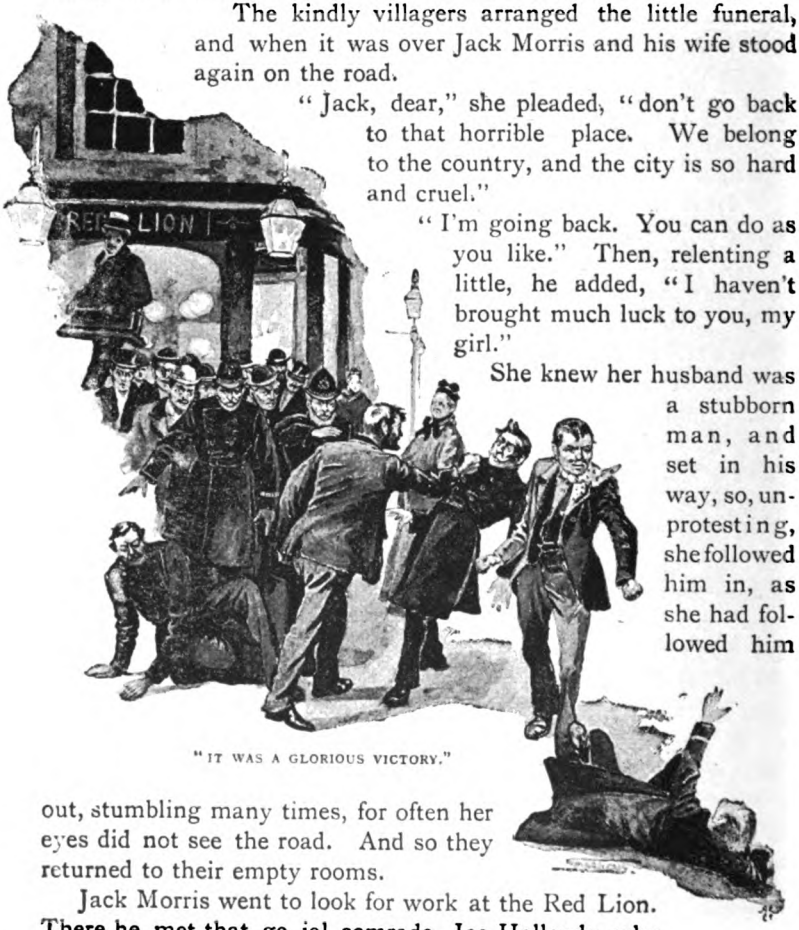
her lap, swaying her body to and fro over him, moaning as she did so. Morris needed no answer. He stood on the road with hardening face, and looked down on his wife and child without speaking.

The kindly villagers arranged the little funeral, and when it was over Jack Morris and his wife stood again on the road.

"Jack, dear," she pleaded, "don't go back to that horrible place. We belong to the country, and the city is so hard and cruel."

"I'm going back. You can do as you like." Then, relenting a little, he added, "I haven't brought much luck to you, my girl."

She knew her husband was a stubborn man, and set in his way, so, unprotesting, she followed him in, as she had followed him



"IT WAS A GLORIOUS VICTORY."

out, stumbling many times, for often her eyes did not see the road. And so they returned to their empty rooms.

Jack Morris went to look for work at the Red Lion. There he met that genial comrade, Joe Hollends, who had been reformed, and who had backslid twice since Jack had foregathered with him before. It is but fair to Joe to admit that he had never been optimistic about his own reclamation, but, being an obliging man, even when he was sober, he was willing to give the Social League every chance. Jack was deeply grieved at the death of his son, although he had said no word to his wife that would show it. It therefore took more liquor than usual to bring him up to the point of good comradeship that reigned at the Red Lion. When he

and Joe left the tavern that night it would have taken an expert to tell which was the more inebriated. They were both in good fighting trim, and both were in the humour for a row. The police, who had reckoned on Joe alone, suddenly found a new element in the fight that not only upset their calculations but themselves as well. It was a glorious victory, and, as both fled down a side street, Morris urged Hollends to come along, for the representatives of law and order have the habit of getting reinforcements which often turn a victory into a most ignominious defeat.

"I can't," panted Hollends. "The beggars have hurt me."

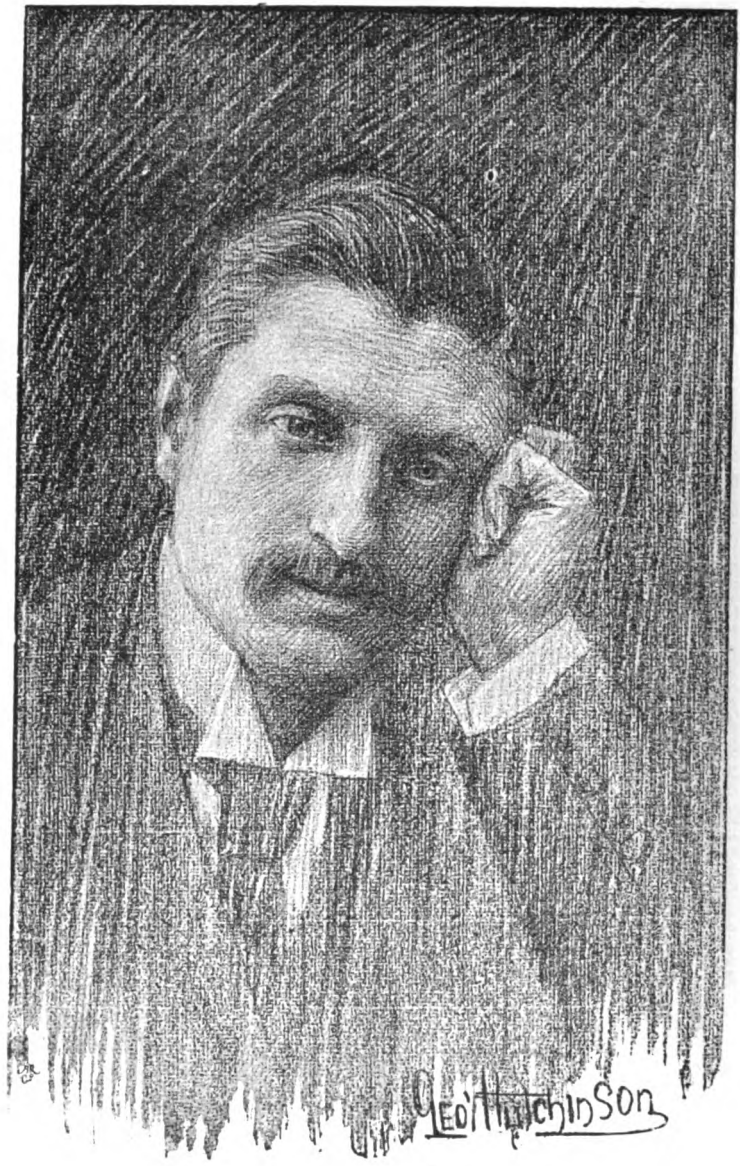
"Come along. I know a place where we are safe."

Drunk as he was, Jack succeeded in finding the hole in the wall that allowed him to enter a vacant spot behind the box factory. There Hollends lay down with a groan, and there Morris sank beside him in a drunken sleep. The police were at last revenged, and finally.

When the grey daylight brought Morris to a dazed sense of where he was, he found his companion dead beside him. He had a vague fear that he would be tried for murder, but it was not so. From the moment that Hollends, in his fall, struck his head on the kerb, the Providence which looks after the drunken deserted him.

But the inquest accomplished one good object. It attracted the attention of the Social League to Jack Morris, and they are now endeavouring to reclaim him.

Whether they succeed or not, he was a man that was certainly once worth saving.



very truly yours

H Rider Haggard

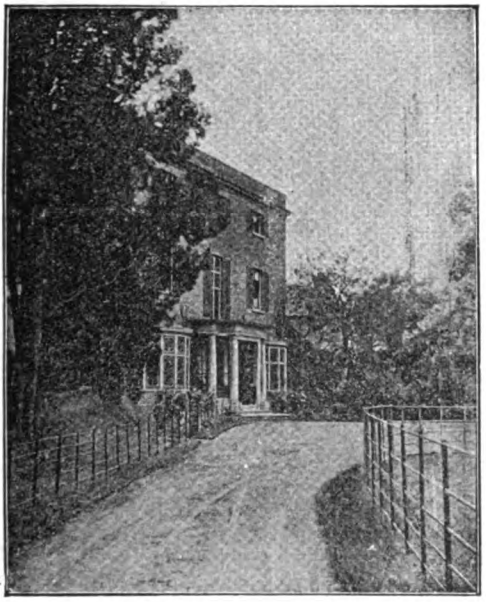
My First Book.

DAWN.

By H. Rider Haggard.

Illustrations by G. and B. Hutchinson.

Photographs by Messrs. Fradelle and Young.



THE FRONT GARDEN.

I THINK that it was in an article by a fellow-scribe, where, doubtless more in sorrow than in anger, that gentleman exposed the worthlessness of the productions of sundry of his brother authors, in which I read that whatever success I had met with as a writer of fiction was due to my literary friends and "nepotic criticism." This is scarcely the case, since when I began to write I do not think that I knew a single creature who had published books—blue books alone excepted. Nobody was ever more outside the ring, or less acquainted with the art of "rolling logs," than the humble individual who pens these lines. But the reader shall judge for himself.

To begin at the beginning: My very first attempt at imaginative writing was made while I was a boy at school. One of the masters promised a prize to that youth who should best describe on paper any incident, real or imaginary. I entered the lists, and selected the scene at an operation in a hospital as my subject. The fact that I had never seen an operation, nor crossed the doors of a hospital, did not deter me from this bold

endeavour, which, however, was justified by its success. I was declared to have won in the competition, though, probably through the forgetfulness of the master, I remember that I never received the promised prize. My next literary effort, written in 1876, was an account of a Zulu war dance, which I witnessed when I was on the staff of the Governor of Natal. It was published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and very kindly noticed in various papers. A year later I wrote another article, entitled "A Visit to the Chief Secocoeni," which appeared in *Macmillan*, and very nearly got me into trouble. I was then serving on the staff of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and the article, signed with my initials, reached South Africa in its printed form shortly after the annexation of the Transvaal. Young men with a pen in their hands are proverbially indiscreet, and in this instance I was no exception. In the course of my article I had described the Transvaal Boer at home with a fidelity that should be avoided by members of a diplomatic mission, and had even gone the length of saying that most of the Dutch women were "fat." Needless to say, my remarks were translated into the Africander papers, and somewhat extensively read, especially by the ladies in question and their male relatives; nor did the editors of those papers forbear to comment on them in leading articles. Shortly afterwards, there was a great and stormy meeting of Boers at Pretoria. As matters began to look serious, somebody ventured among them to ascertain the exciting cause, and returned with the pleasing intelligence that they were all talking of what the Englishman had written about the physical proportions of their womenkind and domestic habits, and threatening to take up arms to avenge it. Of my feelings on learning this

THE BACK GARDEN.

news I will not discourse, but they were uncomfortable, to say the least of it. Happily, in the end, the gathering broke up without bloodshed, but when the late Sir Bartle Frere came to Pretoria, some months afterwards, he administered to me a sound and well-deserved lecture on my indiscretion. I excused myself by saying that I had set down nothing which was not strictly true, and he replied to the effect that therein lay my fault. I quite agree with him; indeed, there is little doubt but that these bald statements of fact as to the stoutness of the Transvaal "fraus," and the lack of cleanliness in their homes, went near to precipitating a result that, as it chanced, was postponed for several years. Well, it is all done with now, and I take this opportunity of apologising to such of the ladies in question as may still be in the land of life.

This unfortunate experience cooled my literary ardour, yet, as it chanced, when some five years later I again took up my pen, it was in connection with African affairs. These pages are no place for politics, but I must allude to them in explanation. It will be remembered that the Transvaal was annexed by Great Britain in 1877. In 1881 the Boers rose in rebellion and administered several thrashings to our troops, whereon the Government of this country came suddenly to the conclusion that a wrong had been done to the victors, and subject to some paper restrictions, gave them back their independence. As it chanced, at the time I was living on some African property belonging to me in the centre of the operations, and so disgusted was I, in common with thousands of others, at the turn which matters had taken, that I shook the dust of South Africa off my feet and returned to England. Now, the first impulse of an aggrieved Englishman is to write to the *Times*, and if I remember right I took this course, but my letter not being inserted, I enlarged upon the idea and composed a book called "Cetewayo and his White Neighbours." This semi-political work, or rather history, was very carefully constructed from the records of some six years' experience, and by the help of a shelf full of blue books that stare me in the face as I write these words; and the fact that it still goes on selling seems to show that it has some value in the eyes of students of South African politics. But when I had written my book I was confronted by a difficulty which I had not anticipated, being utterly without experience in such affairs—that of finding somebody willing to publish it. I remember that I purchased a copy of the *Athenæum*, and selecting the names of various firms at hazard, wrote to them offering to submit my

manuscript, but, strange to say, none of them seemed anxious to peruse it. At last—how I do not recollect—it came into the hands of Messrs. Trübner, who, after consideration, wrote to say that they were willing to bring it out on the half profit system, provided that I paid down fifty pounds towards the cost of production. I did not at all like the idea of parting with the fifty pounds, but I believed in my book, and was anxious to put my views on the Transvaal rebellion and other African questions before the world. So I consented to the terms, and in due course Cetewayo was published in a neat green binding. Somewhat to my astonishment, it proved a success from a literary point of view. It was not largely purchased—indeed, that fifty pounds took several years on its return journey to my pocket, but it was favourably, and in some instances almost enthusiastically, reviewed, especially in the colonial papers.

MR RIDER HAGGARD AND DAUGHTERS.

About this time the face of a girl whom I saw in a church at Norwood gave me the idea of writing a novel. The face was so perfectly beautiful, and at the same time so refined, that I felt I could fit a story to it which should be worthy of a heroine similarly endowed. When next I saw Mr. Trübner I consulted him on the subject.

"You can write—it is certain that you can write. Yes, do it, and I will get the book published for you," he answered.

Thus encouraged I set to work. How to compose a novel I knew not, so I wrote straight on, trusting to the light of nature to guide me. My main object was to produce the picture of a woman perfect in mind and body, and to show her character ripening and growing spiritual, under the pressure of various afflictions. Of course, there is a vast gulf between a novice's aspiration and his

attainment, and I do not contend that Angela as she appears in "Dawn" fulfils this ideal; also, such a person in real life might, and probably would, be a bore—

> "Something too bright and good
> For human nature's daily food."

Still, this was the end I aimed at. Indeed, before I had done with her, I became so deeply attached to my heroine that, in a literary sense, I have never quite got over it. I worked very hard at this novel during the next six months or so, but at length it was finished and despatched to Mr. Trübner, who, as his firm did not deal in this class of book, submitted it to five or six of the best publishers of fiction. One and all they declined it, so that by degrees it became clear to me that I might as well have saved my labour. Mr. Trübner, however, had confidence in my work, and submitted the manuscript to Mr. John Cordy Jeaffreson for report; and here I may pause to say that I think there is more kindness in the hearts of literary men than is common in the world. It is not a pleasant task, in the face of repeated failure, again and again to attempt the adventure of persuading brother publishers to undertake the maiden effort of an unknown man. Still less pleasant is it, as I can vouch from experience, to wade through a lengthy and not particularly legible manuscript, and write an elaborate opinion thereon for the benefit of a stranger. Yet Mr. Trübner and Mr. Jeaffreson did these things for me without fee or reward. Mr. Jeaffreson's report I have lost or mislaid, but I remember its purport well. It was to the effect that there was a great deal of power in the novel, but that it required to be entirely re-written. The first part he thought so good that he advised me to expand it, and the unhappy ending he could not agree with. If I killed the heroine, it would kill the book, he said. He may have been right, but I still hold to

THE HALL.

my first conception, according to which Angela was doomed to an early and pathetic end, as the fittest crown to her career. That the story needed re-writing there is no doubt, but I believe that it would have been better as a work of art if I had dealt with it on the old lines, especially as the expansion of the beginning, in accordance with the advice of my kindly critic, took the tale back through the history of another generation—always a most dangerous experiment. Still, I did as I was told, not presuming to set up a judgment of my own in the matter. If I had worked hard at the first draft of the novel, I worked much harder at the second, especially as I could not give all my leisure to it, being engaged at the time in reading for the Bar. So hard did I work that at length my eyesight gave out, and I was obliged to complete the last hundred sheets in a darkened room. But let my eyes ache as they might, I would not give up till it was finished, within about three months from the date of its commencement. Recently, I went through this book to prepare it for a new edition, chiefly in order to cut out some of the mysticism and tall writing, for which it is too remarkable, and was pleased to find that it still interested me. But if a writer may be allowed to criticise his own work, it is two books, not one. Also, the hero is a very poor creature. Evidently I was too much occupied with my heroines to give much thought to him; moreover, women are so much easier and more interesting to write about, for whereas no two of them are alike, in modern men, or rather, in young men of the middle and upper classes, there is a paralysing sameness. As a candid friend once said to me, "There is nothing manly about that chap, Arthur"—he is the hero—"except his bull-dog!" With Angela herself I am still in love; only she ought to have died, which, on the whole, would have been a better fate than being married to Arthur, more especially if he was anything like the illustrator's conception of him.

In its new shape "Dawn" was submitted to Messrs. Hurst and Blackett, and at once accepted by that firm. Why it was called "Dawn" I am not now quite clear, but I think it was because I could find no other title acceptable to the publishers. The discovery of suitable titles is a more difficult matter than people who do not write romances would suppose, most of the good ones having been used already and copyrighted. In due course the novel was published in three fat volumes, and a pretty green cover, and I sat down to await events. At the best I did not expect to win a fortune out of it, as if every one of the five

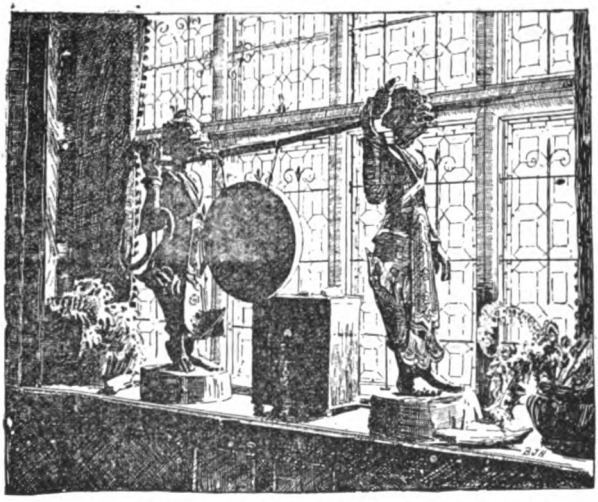
hundred copies printed were sold, I could only make fifty pounds under my agreement—not an extravagant reward for a great deal of labour. As a matter of fact, but four hundred and fifty sold, so the net proceeds of the venture amounted to ten pounds only, and forty surplus copies of the book, which I bored my friends by presenting to them. But as the copyright of the work reverted to me at the expiration of a year, I cannot grumble at this result. The reader may think that it was mercenary of me to consider my first book from this financial point of view, but to be frank, though

MR. RIDER HAGGARD'S STUDY.

the story interested me much in its writing, and I had a sneaking belief in its merits, it never occurred to me that I, an utterly inexperienced beginner, could hope to make any mark in competition with the many brilliant writers of fiction who were already before the public. Therefore, so far as I was concerned, any reward in the way of literary reputation seemed to be beyond my reach.

It was on the occasion of the publication of this novel that I made my first and last attempt to "roll a log," with somewhat amusing results. Almost the only person of influence whom I knew in

the world of letters was the editor of a certain society paper. I had not seen him for ten years, but at this crisis I ventured to recall myself to his memory, and to ask him, not for a favourable notice, but that the book should be reviewed in his journal. He acceded to my prayer; it was reviewed, but after a fashion for which I did not bargain. This little incident taught me a lesson, and the moral of it is: never trouble an editor about your immortal works; he can so easily be even with you. I commend it to all literary tyros. Even if you are in a position to command "puffs," the public will find you out in the second edition, and revenge itself upon your next book. Here is a story that illustrates the accuracy of this statement; it came to me on good authority, and I believe it to be true. A good many years ago, the relation of an editor of a great paper published a novel. It was a bad novel, but a desperate effort was made to force it upon the public, and in many of the leading journals appeared notices so laudatory that readers fell into the trap, and the book went through several editions. Encouraged by success, the writer published a second book, but the public had found her out, and it fell flat. Being a person of resource, she brought out a third work under a *nom de plume*, which, as at first, was accorded an enthusiastic reception by previous arrangement, and forced into circulation. A fourth followed under the same name, but again the public had found her out, and her career as a novelist came to an end.



"CURIOS."

To return to the fate of "Dawn." In most quarters it met with the usual reception of a first novel by an unknown man. Some of the reviewers sneered at it, and some "slated"

it, and made merry over the misprints—a cheap form of wit that saves those who practise it the trouble of going into the merits of a book. Two very good notices fell to its lot, however, in the *Times* and in the *Morning Post*, the first of these speaking about the novel in terms of which any amateur writer might feel proud, though, unfortunately, it appeared too late to be of much service. Also, I discovered that the story had interested a great many readers, and none of them more than the late Mr. Trübner, through whose kind offices it came to be published, who, I was told, paid me the strange compliment of continuing its perusal till within a few hours of his death, a sad event that the enemy might say was hastened thereby. In this connection I remember that the first hint I received that my story was popular with the ordinary reading public, whatever reviewers might say of it, came from the lips of a young lady, a chance visitor at my house, whose name I have forgotten. Seeing the book lying on the table, she took a volume up, saying—

A STUDY CORNER.

"Oh, have you read 'Dawn'? It is a first-rate novel, I have just finished it." Somebody explained, and the subject dropped, but I was not a little gratified by the unintended compliment.

These facts encouraged me, and I wrote a second novel—"The Witch's Head." This book I endeavoured to publish serially by posting the MS. to the editors of various magazines for their consideration. But in those days there were no literary agents or Authors' Societies to help young writers with their experience and advice, and the bulky manuscript always came back to my hand like a boomerang, till at length I wearied of the attempt. Of course I sent it to the wrong people; afterwards the editor of a leading monthly told me that he would have been delighted to run the book had it fallen into the hands of his firm. In the end, as in the case of "Dawn," I published "The Witch's Head" in three

volumes. Its reception astonished me, for I did not think so well of the book as I had done of its predecessor. In that view, by the way, the public has borne out my judgment, for to this day three copies of "Dawn" are absorbed for every two of "The Witch's Head," a proportion that has never varied since the two works appeared in one volume form.

"The Witch's Head" was very well reviewed; indeed, in one or two cases, the notices were almost enthusiastic, most of all when they dealt with the African part of the book, which I had inserted as padding, the fight between Jeremy and the Boer giant being singled out for especial praise. Whatever it may lack, one merit this novel has, however, that was overlooked by all the reviewers.

MR. RIDER HAGGARD.

Omitting the fictitious incidents introduced for the purposes of the story, it contains an accurate account of the great disaster inflicted upon our troops by the Zulus at Isandhlwana. I was in the country at the time of the massacre, and heard its story from the lips of survivors, also, in writing of it, I studied the official reports in the blue books and the minutes of the Court Martial.

"The Witch's Head" attained the dignity of being pirated in America, and in England went out of print in a few weeks, but no argument that I could use would induce my publishers to re-issue it in a one-volume edition. The risk was too great, they said. Then it was I came to the conclusion that I would abandon the making of books. The work was very hard, and when put to the test of experience the glamour that surrounds this occupation vanished. I did not care much for the publicity it involved, and, like most young authors, I failed to appreciate being sneered at by anonymous critics who happened not to care for what I wrote, and whom I had no opportunity of answering. It is true that then, as now, I liked the work for its own sake. Indeed, I have always thought that literature would be a charming profession

if its conditions allowed of the depositing of manuscripts, when completed, in a drawer, there to languish in obscurity, or of their private publication only. But I could not afford myself these luxuries. I was too modest to hope for any renown worth having, and for the rest the game seemed scarcely worth the candle. I had published a history and two novels. On the history I had lost fifty pounds, on the first novel I had made ten pounds, and on the second fifty; net profit on the three, ten pounds, which in the case of a man with other occupations and duties did not appear to be an adequate return for the labour involved. But I was not destined to escape thus from the toils of romance. One day I chanced to read a clever article in favour of boys' books, and it occurred to me that I might be able to do as well as others in that line. I was working at the Bar at the time, but in my spare evenings, more for amusement than from any other reason, I entered on the literary adventure that ended in the appearance of "King Solomon's Mines." This romance has proved very successful, although three firms, including my own publishers, refused even to consider it. But as it can scarcely be called one of my first books, I shall not speak of it here.

THE DRAWING ROOM.

In conclusion, I will tell a moving tale, that it may be a warning to young authors for ever. After my publishers declined to issue "The Witch's Head" in a six-shilling edition, I tried many others without success, and at length in my folly signed an agreement with a firm since deceased. Under this document the firm in question agreed to bring out "Dawn" and "The Witch's Head" in a two-shilling edition, and generously to remunerate me with a third share in the profits realised, if any. In return for

this concession, I on my part undertook to allow the said firm to republish any novel that I might write, for a period of five years from the date of the agreement, in a two-shilling form, and on the same third-profit terms. Of course, so soon as the success of "King Solomon's Mines" was established, I received a polite letter from the publishers in question, asking when they might expect to republish that romance at two shillings. Then the matter came under the consideration of lawyers and other skilled persons, with the result that it appeared that, if the Courts took a strict view of the agreement, ruin stared me in the face, so far as my literary affairs were concerned. To begin with, either by accident or design, this artful document was so worded that, *prima facie*, the contracting publisher had a right to place his cheap edition on the market whenever it might please him to do so, subject only to the payment of a third of the profit, to be assessed by himself, which practically would have meant nothing at all. How could I expect to dispose of work subject to such a legal "servitude." For five long years I was a slave to the framer of the "hanging" clause of the agreement. Things looked black indeed, when, thanks to the diplomacy of my agent, and to a fortunate change in the *personnel* of the firm to which I was bound, I avoided disaster. The fatal agreement was cancelled, and in consideration of my release I undertook to write two books upon a moderate royalty. Thus, then, did I escape out of bondage. To be just, it was my own fault that I should ever have been sold into it but authors are proverbially guileless when they are anxious to publish their books, and a piece of printed paper with a

THE FARM.

few additions written in a neat hand looks innocent enough. Now no such misfortunes need happen, for the Authors' Society is ready and anxious to protect them from themselves and others, but in those days it did not exist.

This is the history of how I drifted into the writing of books. If it saves one beginner so inexperienced and unfriended as I was in those days from putting his hand to a "hanging" agreement under any circumstances whatsoever, it will not have been set out in vain.

The advice that I give to would-be authors, if I may presume to offer it, is to think for a long while before they enter at all upon a career so hard and hazardous, but having entered on it, not to be easily cast down. There are great virtues in perseverance, even though critics sneer and publishers prove unkind.

Told by the Colonel.

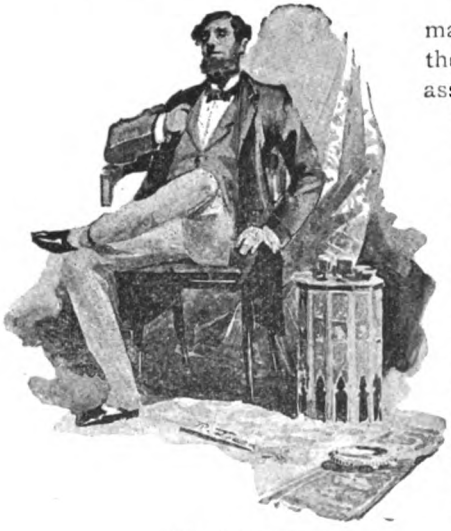
XII.

THE CAT'S REVENGE.

By W. L. Alden.

Illustrations by R. Jack.

WE had been discussing the Darwinian hypothesis, and the Colonel had maintained a profound silence, which was sufficient evidence that he did not believe in the development of man from the lower animals. Some one, however, asked him plumply his opinion of Darwinianism, and he sententiously replied, "Darned nonsense."



"DARNED NONSENSE.

Feeling that this view of the matter possibly merited expansion, the Colonel caused his chair to assume its customary oratorical attitude on its two rear legs, and began to discourse.

"There are some things," he remarked, "which do look as if there might be a grain of truth in this monkey theory. For instance, when I was in France I was pretty nearly convinced that the monkey is the connecting link between man and the Frenchmen, but after all there is no proof of it. That's what's the matter with Darwinianism. When you produce a man who can remember that his grandfather was a monkey, or when you show me a monkey that can produce papers to prove that he is my second cousin, I'll believe all Darwin said on the subject, but as the thing stands I've nothing but Darwin's word to prove that men and monkeys are near relations. So far as I can learn, Darwin didn't know as much about animals as a man ought to know who undertakes to

invent a theory about them. He never was intimate with dogs, and he never drove an army mule. He had a sort of bowing acquaintance with monkeys and a few other animals of no particular standing in the community, but he couldn't even understand a single animal language. Now, if he had gone to work, and learned to read and write, and speak the monkey language, as that American professor that you were just speaking of has done, he might have been able to give us some really valuable information.

"Do I believe that animals talk? I don't simply believe it, I know it. When I was a young man I had a good deal to do with animals, and I learned to understand the cat language just as well as I understood English. It's an easy language when once you get the hang of it, and from what I hear of German the two are considerably alike. You look as if you didn't altogether believe me, though why you should doubt that a man can learn cat language when the world is full of men that pretend to have learned German, and nobody calls their word in question, I don't precisely see.

"Of course, I don't pretend to understand all the cat dialects. For example, I don't know a word of the Angora dialect, and can only understand a sentence here and there of the tortoiseshell dialect, but so far as good, pure standard cat language goes, it's as plain as print to me to-day, though I haven't paid any attention to it for forty years. I don't want you to understand that I ever spoke it. I always spoke English when I was talking with cats. They all understand English as well as you do. They pick it up just as a child picks up a language from hearing it spoken.

"Forty years ago I was a young man, and, like most young men, I fancied that I was in love with a young woman of our town. There isn't the least doubt in my mind that I should have married her if I had not known the cat language. She afterwards married a man whom she took away to Africa with her as a missionary. I knew him well, and he didn't want to go to Africa. Said he had no call to be a missionary, and that all he wanted was to live in a Christian country where he could go and talk with the boys in the bar-room evenings. But his wife carried him off, and it's my belief that if I had married her she would have made me turn missionary, or pirate, or anything else that she thought best. I shall never cease to be grateful to Thomas Aquinas for saving me from that woman.

"This was the way of it. I was living in a little cottage that belonged to my uncle, and that he let me have rent free on condition that I should take care of it, and keep the grounds in an attractive state until he could sell it. I had an old negro housekeeper and two cats. One of them, Martha Washington by name, was young and handsome, and about as bright a cat as I ever knew.

"I HAD AN OLD NEGRO HOUSEKEEPER AND TWO CATS."

She had a strong sense of humour, too, which is unusual with cats, and when something amused her she would throw back her head and open her mouth wide, and laugh a silent laugh that was as hearty and rollicking as a Methodist parson's laugh when he hears a grey-haired joke at a negro minstrel show. Martha was perhaps the most popular cat in the town, and there was scarcely a minute in the day when there wasn't some one of her admirers in the back yard. As for serenades, she had three or four every night that it didn't rain. There was a quartette club formed by four first-class feline voices, and the club used to give Martha and me two or three hours of music three times a week. I used sometimes to find as many as six or seven old boots in the back yard of a morning that had been contributed by enthusiastic neighbours. As for society, Martha Washington was at the top of the heap. There wasn't a more fashionable cat in the whole State of Ohio—I was living in Ohio at the time—and in spite of it all she was as simple and unaffected in her ways as if she had been born and bred in a Quaker meeting-house.

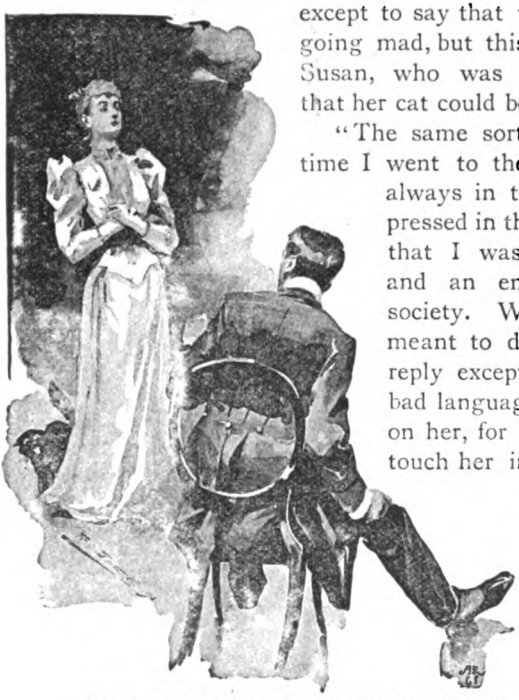
"One afternoon Martha was giving a four o'clock milk on the verandah next to my room. I always gave her permission to

give that sort of entertainment whenever she wanted to, for the gossip of her friends used to be very amusing to me. Among the guests that afternoon was Susan's—that was the young lady I wanted to marry—Maltese cat. Now this cat had always pretended to be very fond of me, and Susan often said that her cat never made a mistake in reading character, and that the cat's approval of me was equivalent to a first-class Sunday-school certificate of moral character. I didn't care anything about the cat myself, for somehow I didn't place any confidence in her professions. There was an expression about her tail which, to my mind, meant that she was insincere and treacherous. The Maltese cat had finished her milk when the conversation drifted around to the various mistresses of the cats, and presently someone spoke of Susan. Then the Maltese began to say things about Susan that made my blood boil. It was not only what she said but what she insinuated, and, according to her, Susan was one of the meanest and most contemptible women in the whole United States. I stood it as long as I could, and then I got up and said to Martha Washington, 'I think your Maltese friend is needed at her home, and the sooner she goes the better if she doesn't want to be helped home with a club.' That was enough. The Maltese, who was doing up her back fur when I spoke, stopped, looked at me as if she could tear me into pieces, and then flounced out of the house without saying a word. I understood that there was an end to her pretence of friendship for me, and that henceforth I should have an enemy in Susan's house who might, perhaps, be able to do me a good deal of harm.

"I USED TO FIND OLD BOOTS IN THE YARD."

"THE SOONER SHE GOES THE BETTER."

"The next time I called to see Susan the Maltese was in the room, and she instantly put up her back and tail and swore at me as if I was a Chinaman on the look out for material for a stolen dinner. 'What can be the matter with poor pussy?' said Susan. 'She seems to be so terribly afraid of you all of a sudden. I hope it doesn't mean that you have been doing something that she doesn't approve of.' I didn't make any reply to this insinuation, except to say that the cat might perhaps be going mad, but this didn't help me any with Susan, who was really angry at the idea that her cat could be capable of going mad.



"POOR PUSSY'S NERVES ARE THOROUGHLY UPSET."

"The same sort of thing happened every time I went to the house. The cat was always in the room, and always expressed in the plainest way the opinion that I was a thief and a murderer, and an enemy of the temperance society. When I asked her what she meant to do, she would give me no reply except a fresh oath, or other bad language. Threats had no effect on her, for she knew that I could not touch her in Susan's house, and she didn't intend that I should catch her outside of the house. Nothing was clearer than that the Maltese was bound to make a quarrel between me and Susan in revenge for what I had said at Martha's four o'clock milk.

"Meanwhile Susan began to take the thing very seriously, and hinted that the cat's opposition to me might be a providential warning against me. 'I never knew her to take such a prejudice against anyone before,' she said, 'except against that converted Jew who afterwards turned out to be a burglar, and nearly murdered poor dear Mr. Higby, the Baptist preacher, the night he broke into Mr. Higby's house and stole all his hams.' Once when I did manage to give the Maltese a surreptitious kick, and she yelled as if she was half-killed, Susan said, 'I am really afraid

I shall have to ask you to leave us now. Poor pussy's nerves are so thoroughly upset that I must devote all my energies to soothing her. I do hope she is mistaken in her estimate of you.' This was not very encouraging, and I saw clearly that if the Maltese kept up her opposition the chances that Susan would marry me were not worth a rush.

"Did I tell you that I had a large grey cat by the name of Thomas Aquinas? He was in some respects the most remarkable cat I ever met. Most people considered him rather a dull person, but among cats he was conceded to have a colossal mind. Cats would come from miles away to ask his advice about things. I don't mean such trifling matters as his views on mice-catching—which, by the way, is a thing that has very little interest for most cats—or his opinion of the best way in which to get a canary bird through the bars of a cage. They used to consult him on matters of the highest importance, and the opinions that he used to give would have laid over those of Benjamin Franklin himself. Why Martha Washington told me that Thomas Aquinas knew more about bringing up kittens than the oldest and most experienced feline matron that she had ever known. As for common sense, Thomas Aquinas was just a solid chunk of it, as you might say, and I got into the habit of consulting him whenever I wanted a good, safe, cautious opinion. He would see at a glance where the trouble was, and would give me advice that no lawyer could have beaten, no matter how big a fee he might have charged.

"Well! I went home from Susan's house, and I said to Thomas Aquinas, 'Thomas,' for he was one of those cats that you would no more have called 'Tom' than you would call Mr. Gladstone 'Bill'—'Thomas,' I said, 'I want you to come with me to Miss Susan's and tell that Maltese beast that if she doesn't quit her practice of swearing at me whenever I come into the room it will be the worse for her.'

"'That's easy enough,' said Thomas. 'I know one or two little things about that cat that would not do to be told, and she knows that I know them. Never you fear but that I can shut her up in a moment. I heard that she was going about bragging that she would get square with you for something you said to her one day, but I didn't feel called upon to interfere without your express approval.'

"The next day Thomas and I strolled over to Susan's, and, as luck would have it, we were shown into her reception room before she came down stairs. The Maltese cat was in the room, and

began her usual game of being filled with horror at the sight of such a hardened wretch as myself. Of course, Thomas Aquinas took it up at once, and the two had a pretty hot argument. Now Thomas, in spite of his colossal mind, was a quick-tempered cat, and he was remarkably free spoken when he was roused. One word led to another, and presently the Maltese flew at Thomas, and for about two minutes that room was so thick with fur that you could hardly see the fight. Of course, there could have been only one end to the affair. My cat weighed twice what the Maltese weighed, and after a few rounds he had her by the neck, and never let go until he had killed her. I was just saying 'Hooray! Thomas!' when Susan came into the room.

"SUSAN CAME INTO THE ROOM."

"I pass over what she said. Its general sense was that a man who encouraged dumb animals to fight, and who brought a great savage brute into her house to kill her sweet little pussy in her own parlour, wasn't fit to live. She would listen to no explanations, and when I said that Thomas had called at my request to reason with the Maltese about her unkind conduct towards me, Susan said that my attempt to turn an infamous outrage into a stupid joke made the matter all the worse, and that she must insist that I and my prize fighting beast should leave her house at once and never enter it again.

"So you see that if it had not been that I understood what the Maltese cat said at Martha Washington's milk party, I should probably never have quarrelled with either Susan or her cat, and should now have been a missionary in Central Africa, if I hadn't blown my brains out, or taken to drink. I have often thought that the man Susan did marry might have been saved if he had known the cat language in time, and had made the acquaintance of the Maltese."

The Colonel paused, and presently I asked him if he really expected us to believe his story. "Why not?" he replied. "It isn't any stiffer than Darwin's yarn about our being descended from monkeys. You believe that on the word of a man you never saw, and I expect you to believe my story that I understand the cat language on my unsupported word. Perhaps the story is a little tough, but if you are going in for science you shouldn't let your credulity be backed down by any story."

J. L. Toole
"Walker. London"
"Oh Sarah I'm slipping"

"Lions in Their Dens."

J. L. TOOLE.

By Raymond Blathwayt.

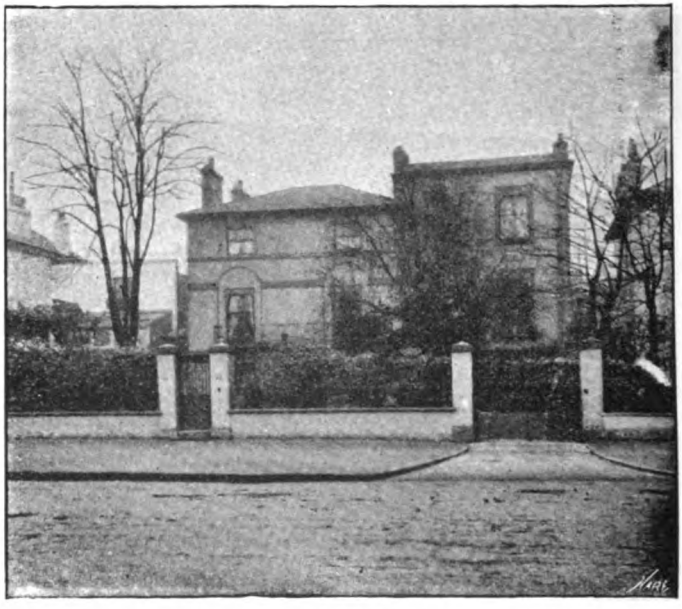
Illustrations by Louis Gunnis.

(Photographs by Messrs. Fradelle & Young, and Falk, of Sydney.)

EVERY one who writes an article upon Mr. Toole begins by telling his readers how entirely lovable a man he is, and I do not know why I should differ from every one else, for, in this case at all events, what every one says is true. There are few actors, either in the past or present, who have so thoroughly succeeded in placing themselves upon a footing of the most friendly and cordial nature with their audience as Mr. John Lawrence Toole. And not only has he succeeded in establishing such relations between himself and his audience, but he has been to the full as successful in endowing the characters he has undertaken with those same lovable qualities which have endeared him both to the public and to his own private friends. Few actors so entirely breathe into their parts the very spirit of their nature and essence of their being as Mr. Toole breathes into his. With high and low, rich and old, young and poor alike, he is a never-failing favourite, and the moment his kindly face appears upon the stage, and the familiar voice once again awakens the memories of by-gone years, a burst of affectionate applause breaks out in welcome of the dear old favourite of our English stage. No matter where a man has been; in the Great Republic over the water, or in the burning lands of India, or in the New World under our feet; when he returns, after years of absence, to the old country, and the familiar faces have passed away, and all things have become new, yet there is still one face that is the same, one voice in which

MR. TOOLE IN "THE STEEPLECHASE."

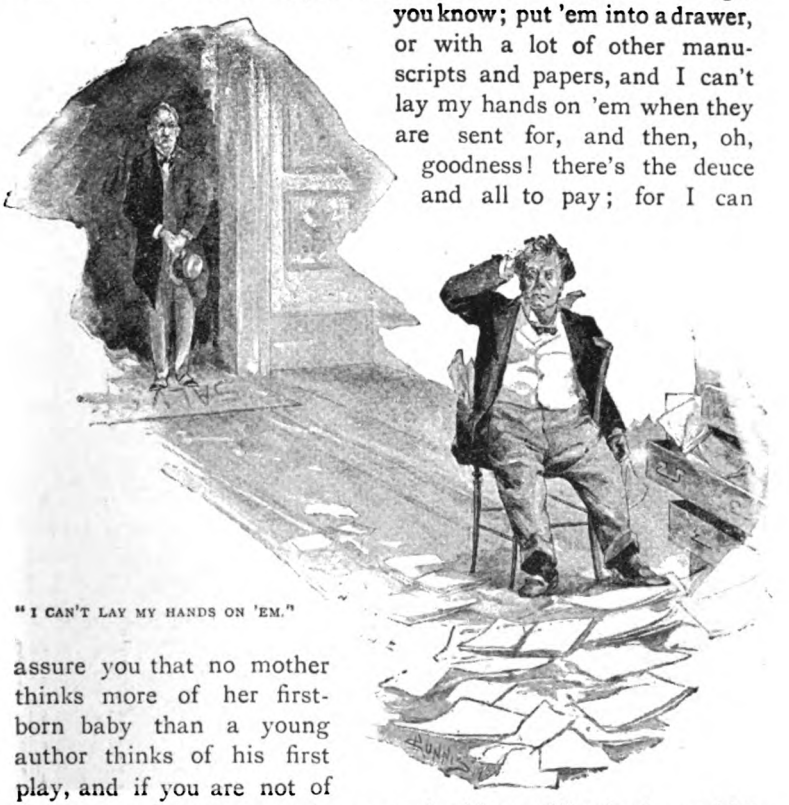
there is still the old familiar ring, and to many such a wanderer old "Johnny Toole" becomes the one connecting line between the dear old past and the cold new present. And who does not know the aspect of the man himself—the short, sturdy figure, the slight limp in his walk, the kind, pleasant face with the mobile mouth and the eyeglass screwed in the smiling eye, and the hair, now sprinkled with grey, brushed back from the broad open forehead? The genial, pleasant manner, the entire ease of the man, and the utter absence of all that detestable putting on of "side" which is too often characteristic of the young actor of the present day, how all these things go towards the explanation of his universal popularity! A



MR. TOOLE'S HOUSE.

great sorrow has overshadowed the latter years of his life, a sorrow from which he will never shake himself free, but which has only deepened the tenderness of the nature which is so characteristic of the man. I spent a morning with him very recently in his house at Maida Vale. As he entered the room and I asked him how he was, he replied, "Oh, well, I am pretty middling, thanks; an actor's is such a hard life, you know," he went on, confidentially, as he pushed me into a chair and took one himself upon the opposite side of the hearthrug. "I have just been reading a whole bundle

of manuscript plays, and you never saw such rubbish in your life. And then"—he went on, plaintively enough—"I lose the things, you know; put 'em into a drawer, or with a lot of other manuscripts and papers, and I can't lay my hands on 'em when they are sent for, and then, oh, goodness! there's the deuce and all to pay; for I can



"I CAN'T LAY MY HANDS ON 'EM."

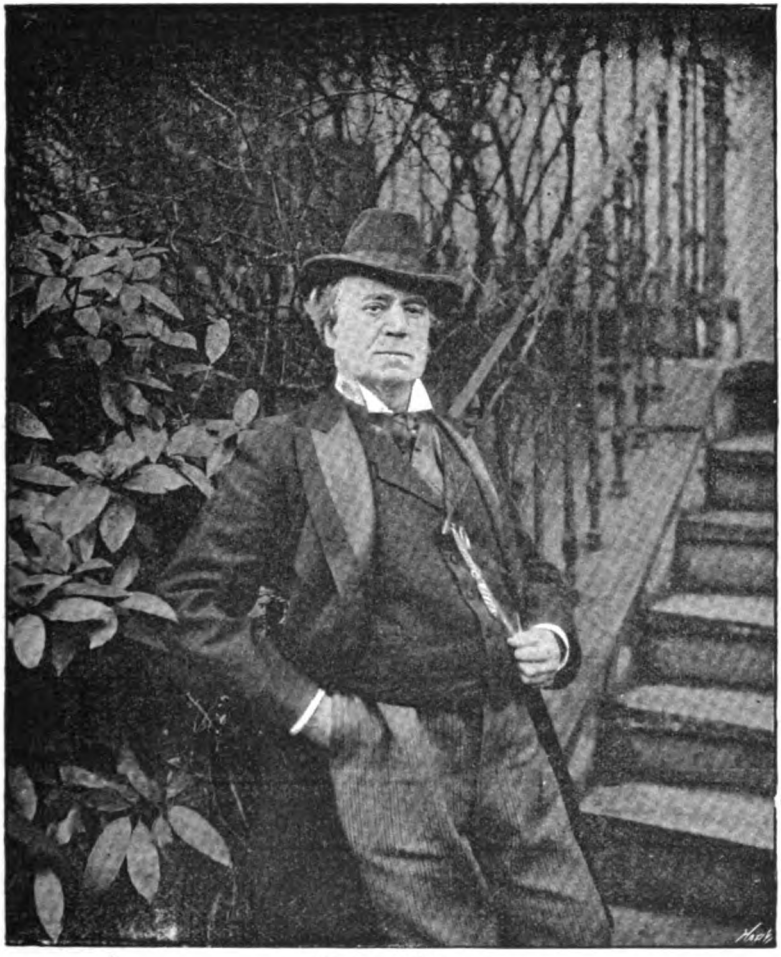
assure you that no mother thinks more of her first-born baby than a young author thinks of his first play, and if you are not of the same opinion he regards you as the biggest idiot in the world." "Well, but," I ventured to remark—"why on earth do you bother about the things?" "Oh, well," said he—"you know I can't help myself; you never can get away from them. For instance, I go out to a harmless evening party, and a country parson comes up to me, the most unlikely man in all the world, you'd think, and he'll say to me, 'My brother has just written a play, Mr. Toole; I wish you'd just cast your eye over it.' And I can't say No, Mr. Blathwayt, I can't say No. Well, now you're here," he went on after a moment, "you'll like to have a look round, won't you? I've got lots of interesting things here. Come into what I call my study—although," continued he, with a laugh, "I am afraid I don't get through much study. I am too busy to write, you know," he rambled on in a voice and manner that was amusingly

reminiscent of "Walker London." So into the study we went, encountering on our way a big Australian black bird, which was wandering about the house in an aimless and irresponsible fashion, crooning to itself memories of its Antipodean home. Before we entered the study, Mr. Toole drew my attention to a beautiful model of the picturesque old Maypole Inn in "Barnaby Rudge." with a number of the characters in the novel wandering about in front of the house. There was Barnaby Rudge himself, there was his supernaturally wicked old raven; old Joe Willet, the landlord, stood smoking in his shirt-sleeves, while pretty Dolly Varden herself was tripping down to town. "There," said my host, "isn't that clever? It stood for many years at the 'Hen and Chickens' in Birmingham, and Dickens used to admire it very much when he used to visit that town on his reading tours." Two little Japanese figures, reposing upon the top of the case which contained this model, looked down upon Mr. Toole as he stood beneath them. He set their arms and heads moving, observing, as he did so, "Often, when I am studying a part, I set those little figures going, they do for the public applauding."

MR. TOOLE AND HIS "RAVEN."

In the study itself, the walls were thickly hung with pictorial reminiscences—chiefly of the theatrical past. There were portraits of Macready in character, with his small, neat writing beneath; there was Charles Matthews in some character as a boy, and a portrait of old John Reeve, a celebrated comedian in his day; there was Mr. Toole as *Paw Clawdian;* there was Liston as *Paul Pry;* there were any amount of portraits of his dear old friend Henry Irving. I was much interested in an old theatrical bill of 1813 announcing Edmund Kean's appearance as *Hamlet.* And then Mr. Toole brought in a large framed letter which hung up in the hall. It was a letter

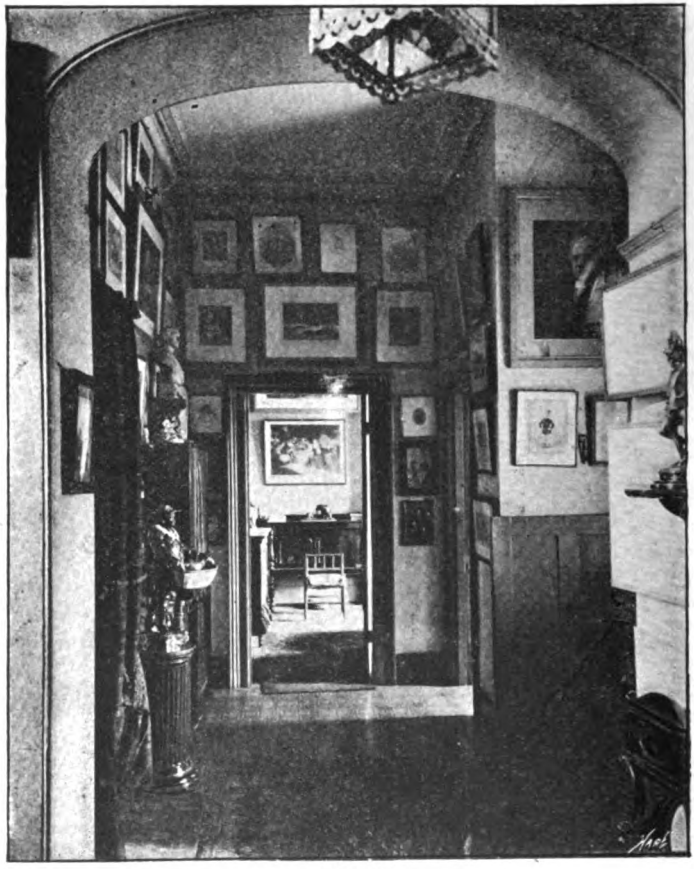
from Thackeray to Charles Matthews when he was lessee of Covent Garden Theatre, and it was written on the occasion of the Queen's first state visit to Covent Garden after her marriage in 1840. A pen and ink sketch by Thackeray adorned a large half



MR J. L. TOOLE.

of the page, in which he had represented Her Majesty with an enormous crown upon her head, and two or three queer sceptres in her hand, talking to the Prince Consort, who sat with her in the royal box, in the rear of which stood the members of the royal suite. In another corner of the hall there hung a letter,

carefully framed, which bore the signature of "Nelson and Brontë," and close beside it there was a clever pencil sketch by George Cruikshank, representing a London 'bus full of people of that period, and with the price, one shilling, marked up in large figures outside it—a curious glimpse of bygone days. In Mr. Toole's dining room we found that clever lady artist,



THE HALL.

Folkard, who some time ago painted so faithful a likeness of old Mrs. Keeley, engaged in giving the finishing touches to an equally admirable portrait of my genial host himself. The dining room, no less than the other room, was crammed with "virtuous and bigoted articles." There was some beautiful old china which had once belonged to Charles Dickens, and some

MR. TOOLE IN "ARTFUL CARDS."

handsome ivory elephants which Mr. Toole had brought with him from Columbo stood upon the sideboard. A very lovely oil painting by Keeley Halswelle, not in the least in his usual style, represented a far stretch of country, over the blue sky of which vast cumuli were massing themselves in snowy piles. There was a portrait, by Clint, of Stephen Kemble, who, like Mark Lemon, used to play *Falstaff* without padding. A painting of Joseph Jefferson, the celebrated American Rip Van Winkle, reminded me of a splendid picture of his which I always used to admire so much in the "Players' Club" in New York, and I observed, as Mr. Toole pointed out a clever sketch by Mr. Weedon Grossmith, that it was curious to notice how many actors were also good painters. "Why, yes," replied Toole with a quizzical smile, "I have painted a good many years myself." "Oh, indeed," said I—not immediately catching his meaning—"may I ask what you have painted?" "My face," said he, with an amused chuckle of much enjoyment at having caught me. Mr. Toole then pointed out to me James Wallack, the father of the celebrated American actor, Lester Wallack, in his favourite character

MR. TOOLE AND HIS JAPANESE AUDIENCE.

of *The Brigand*. "Ah!" said Mr. Toole, "that reminds me of an anecdote that's told about James Wallack, and which ought to be a warning to actors never to make speeches from the stage. Wallack was playing *The Brigand* one night, and he was in the midst of his great dying scene, when an old gentleman, who was sitting in the stalls, got up and put on his hat, tied a scarf round his neck, and buttoned up his coat with great deliberation. Wallack got very irritated, and just as the old gentleman was going out, he called out to him, 'The piece is not finished yet, sir.' The old gentleman, who was not in the least disconcerted, replied,

MR. TOOLE AS "THE DON."

MR. TOOLE IN "OFF THE LINE."

'Thank you, Mr. Wallack, I have seen *quite* enough.'" When we returned to the drawing room, into which I had first been shown, having specially noted on my way through the hall Keeley Halswelle's sketch of Mr. Toole as *The Artful Dodger* in 1854, and a few pages from Thackeray's MSS. of "Philip" which hung upon the wall, Mr. Toole took out an enormous photographic album which contained the portraits of all the celebrities, big and little—and some of them were very big indeed, and some of them were very small—who had been present at a great banquet which was given in Mr. Toole's honour before he left England for his Australian tour. Everyone was

there—noblemen, journalists, and actors; legal luminaries and ecclesiastical dignitaries, people of social prominence and scientific fame; all the principal figures, indeed, that go to the making of this vast body politic. "I told a gentleman on board ship," humorously remarked Mr. Toole, "that these were all the members of my company. I don't know if he believed me or not." Then came albums full of autographs, old playbills, portraits of celebrated actors long since crumbled into the dust, letters the writing of which was fast fading away, a characteristic letter from Charles Dickens acknowledging a beautiful paper knife which Toole had sent him.

One of the letters which Mr. Toole most prizes, and the prayer of which, with Mr. Hollingshead's assistance, he was delighted to grant, is the following characteristic epistle:—

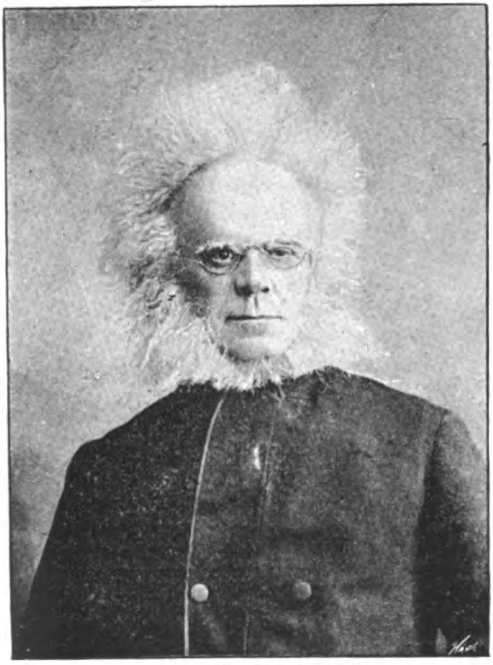
"Belle Vue Mansions, Brighton, August 6th, 1873.

"My dear Toole,—Were you ever in a mess? If you never were I can explain it to you, having been in several; indeed, I don't mind confessing to you that I am in one now, and, strange to say, you are perhaps the only man who can get me out of it. You need not button up your pockets, it isn't a pecuniary one. Only fancy! after thirty years' practice and experience I have made a mistake in my dates, and for the first time in my life find myself engaged to two managers at the same time. Now, they say a man cannot serve two masters, but I CAN if they will come one after the other, only one at a time, one down, t'other come on; but to play at Bristol and the Gaiety on the same night (and keep it up for a week) I don't see my way to accomplish. In a moment of enthusiasm I engaged to begin with Chute on September 29th, and I had scarcely done so when Hollingshead reminded me that I was booked to begin with him on that date, and that it could not be altered. Conceive my dismay. Chute holds fast—'can't be altered.' So does Hollingshead—'can't be altered.' Now, Toole—*dear* Toole, BELOVED Toole—can't you stay a week longer at the Gaiety? CAN'T you let me begin there on Monday, October 6th (as I thought I did), and get me out of my dilemma? Can't you make this sacrifice to friendship, and put three or four hundred more into your pocket? Virtue is not its own reward, but an extra week of fine business is. Now, Toole—adored Tooley—the best of men—first of comedians—most amiable of your sex—burst into tears—throw your arms and sob out, 'Do with me as thou wilt—play me another week—pay me another three hundred, and be happy.' Breathless with anxiety, yet swelling with hope, I must await your answer. Pity the sorrows of a poor old man, and even telegraph 'Yes,' rather than keep me in suspense. What's a week to an able-bodied low comedian? Child's play! Why, you'll be wanting to throw in morning performances as well to keep you from rusting. It really is a *chance* for you. Avail yourself of it and bless me, and I'll bless *you*, and Hollingshead will bless us both, and Chute will bless us all.

"With my intermediate blessing, ever faithfully yours,

"C. J. MATTHEWS."

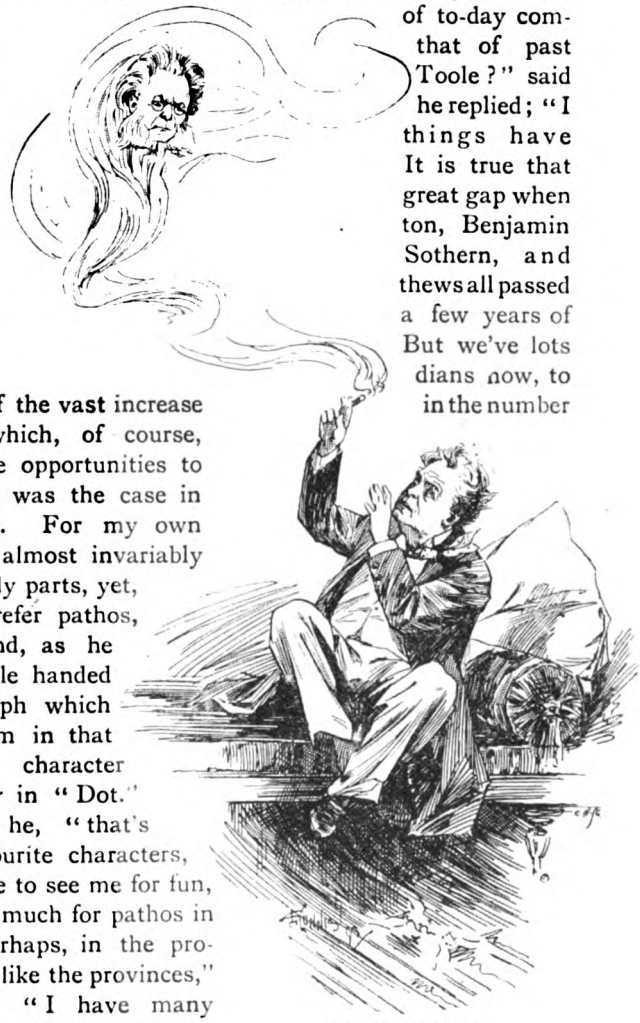
This letter Mr. Toole read to me, exactly mimicking the tone and manner of his old friend whom he still misses. I laughed heartily. "Well, now, Mr. Toole," said I, as we settled down for a conversation on the art he loves so well and has served so faithfully, "has the public taste altered much since you first started in your theatrical career?" "No," he replied, "upon my word I don't think it has very much. My dear old friend Irving, however, has effected as great a change as any man, and his influence has always been for good." "And what of the other Henry?" said I, "Hendrik Ibsen?"



MR. TOOLE AS "IBSEN."

"Henry *Gibson?*" said Toole, looking up; "why, I never heard of him." "No! *Ibsen*," I explained, "*Ibsen*," smiling as I mentally contrasted the great Norwegian physiologist and social Reformer, and the simple-minded, homely, old-fashioned Englishman whom we all love so well. "Oh! Ibsen, Ibsen," said Mr. Toole, "I didn't catch what you said; I thought you said Gibson, and I couldn't think who on earth you meant. Well," he said, "I don't like his work myself. It's so unwholesome, you know. It seems to me such a vitiated taste. They put it down to my ignorance; but if you ask me what I think," he went on confidentially, "I should say there are very few who really care about him. He happens to be the fashion just at present. I played *Ibsen* in 'Ibsen's Ghost,'" he continued, "and they said it was a beautiful make-up. I don't know what the old gentleman would have thought of it himself. Have you seen Irving's *Lear?*" he suddenly remarked, after a moment of silence. "I can remember many *Lears*, but I have never seen anything like his. I have been tremendously

moved by it; but it is far too great a strain for him." Mr. Toole then drifted into eulogy of his almost life-long friend, upon whose generosity and the beauty of whose character he never wearies of expatiating. "And how do you think the comedy of to-day compares with that of past years, Mr. Toole?" said I. "Oh, well," he replied; "I don't think things have altered much. It is true that there was a great gap when Keeley, Buxton, Benjamin Webster, Sothern, and Charles Mathews all passed away within a few years of each other. But we've lots of good comedians now, to say nothing of the vast increase in the number of theatres, which, of course, gives far more opportunities to new men than was the case in my early days. For my own part, though I almost invariably play low comedy parts, yet, as a rule, I prefer pathos, I think." And, as he spoke, Mr. Toole handed me a photograph which represented him in that very pathetic character *Caleb Plummer* in "Dot." "There," said he, "that's one of my favourite characters, but people come to see me for fun, they don't look much for pathos in me, except, perhaps, in the provinces. Ah! I like the provinces," he continued. "I have many friends in them. The Scotch are a splendid people to play to, but then English people, by which I mean English and Scotch alike, are very clannish, and very tender to an old friend. I always feel when I appear upon the stage



TOOLE AND IBSEN.

that I am in the presence of friends. I don't think that French actors are so much regarded as English actors. We feel the affection of our people so much. But, then, we go in and out as private friends amongst the people, more than the Frenchmen do. Their best actors go out to a party, and they act for money, just as they would in the theatre. I think that is very *infra dig.* myself. It seems to me that as soon as the curtain is down the actor's work is over for the night, and when you go out to a man's party you are his guest, but you cease to be so if you take his money. With singers, however, the case is quite different. Some say I am over fastidious, but, mind you," went on Mr. Toole, very earnestly, "I think it would be very snobbish not to join in the fun that is going on as a friend, and help to make everything go pleasantly. As a rule, however, I consider that on this account the English actor's social position is higher than that of a French actor. You ask me about criticism," said Mr. Toole a little later, as we wandered on through different fields of thought, over our wine and cigars. "Well," he continued, "it is very difficult to say whether it has improved or not during late years. In the old days, you know, we had some very good men; there was Oxenford, there was Bayle Bernard, there was Laman Blanchard, all very good men indeed. In the present day, Clement Scott is exceedingly clever, of course; but some of the young men are too much up in the clouds for me—they are very smart, I daresay, but I don't know what they're driving at, you know; all the same, I don't think criticism has any more influence than it had of old, in some cases not so much." And then, branching off on another line, Mr. Toole said—"Did you notice those remarks in the paper the other day about Fanny Kemble's father, and how he came to grief as a theatrical manager? I smiled when I read them. I knew well enough how it was; it

MR. TOOLE AS CALEB PLUMMER IN "DOT."

was that infamous 'order' system. Kemble actually gave 11,000 orders in one season. It's altogether a rotten, bad system. Hundreds apply to me every week for orders who haven't the slightest claim upon me, and especially wealthy people, who are invariably the greatest offenders in this respect, and yet, when they are refused orders, they at once book seats for the play. Of course there are certain people who are thoroughly entitled to orders,

THE LIBRARY.

and I am only too glad to give them in such cases, but I draw the line at giving them to *any* one who chooses to ask me. *I* can't go into a restaurant and get a dinner for nothing—I wish I could; a tailor won't make me a coat for nothing—why should I play to people for nothing? They cannot have any idea how much it costs to keep up a theatre, or perhaps they'd have a little more consideration for one. It's a rotten, bad system, and it ought to be done away with." Later on in the evening Mr. Toole and I drove down to the theatre together, and we resumed our conversation in his very interesting little dressing-room. I congratulated him on the long run

which "Walker London" was having; "but don't long runs tend to artificiality?" I asked. "No," said Mr. Toole; "a new audience every evening saves you from that, to a great extent, especially with an earnest man. Earnestness is everything in an actor, but if you're apathetic you're lost. Still, I sometimes look at *Paul Pry's* umbrella," continued Mr. Toole, pointing to the quaint, queer, green old article that answered to that description, and which stood by itself in a corner of the room, "and wish I could play *Paul Pry* again, but I don't see much chance of that at present. Why, it will soon be 'Walker's' first birthday. I suppose they'll want me to make a speech. And speech-making always bothers me, for I am very nervous.

"IT'S A ROTTEN SYSTEM."

MR. TOOLE IN HIS DRESSING ROOM.

But I daresay I shall 'gammon' through somehow." I observed, "Well, I must say you 'gammon' through very well, for I always think you are one of the easiest speakers of the day." To which Mr. Toole replied, "Well, for my part, I think repose is everything. Quiet humour is always much more telling than noisy

fun, and to feel your part deeply is far more than mere elocution." "Do you think that the training that young people on the stage get, now-a-days, is as thorough as it was in your early days, Mr. Toole?" "Well," he said, "I don't think that young actors get so much practice as they did in the old days when Irving and I used to be for years together on a stock company in Edinburgh. He and I and Helen Faucit have played all the parts in Shakespeare together. But travelling companies have altered all that now-a-days. Still I think I must say that I've got a very fairly good *répertoire* for my people. Did you ever hear

MR. TOOLE AS "PAUL PRY."

THE DINING ROOM.

how I took to the stage?" he continued. "I used to be clerk in a wine merchant's office, and I was also a member of the City Histrionic Club. Well, one night I went to the Pavilion; one of the actors who used to give imitations of popular favourites didn't turn up, and so I was persuaded by a man, who knew that I had been in the habit of giving imitations myself to our little club, to take his place. It was then that I first tasted the sweets of an actor's life. It was then I resolved to quit the merchant's desk for the stage. Do you see that playbill?" he continued, pointing up to an old time-stained paper which hung upon the wall. "There," said he, "that's the first time my name ever appeared on a London playbill. I appeared on that occasion for 'one night only' at the Haymarket Theatre, where a benefit was being given for Mr. Fred Webster, in July, 1852." I glanced round the little room, in which are gathered so many memories of the picturesque past, and in which so many of the best known men of the present day are so frequently to be found having a chat with "Dear Old Johnny Toole." There was an amusing photograph of Toole up to his waist in a hot lake in New Zealand surrounded by a number of Maoris. There was a portrait of himself in his first part in "My Friend the Major." Charles Matthews, in "My Awful Dad," smiled across the room at Paul Bedford and Toole, who were standing within a picture frame together. There was a quaint old coloured print representing Grimaldi—for whom Mr. Toole has a great admiration, and whose snuff-box he regards as quite a treasure—in private life, and in his clown's costume. But to enumerate further the interesting pictures that hang upon the walls of his little dressing-room would be to far exceed my allotted space. I happened on the following night to be delivering a lecture at the

MR. TOOLE AS "REV. AMINADAB SLEEK."

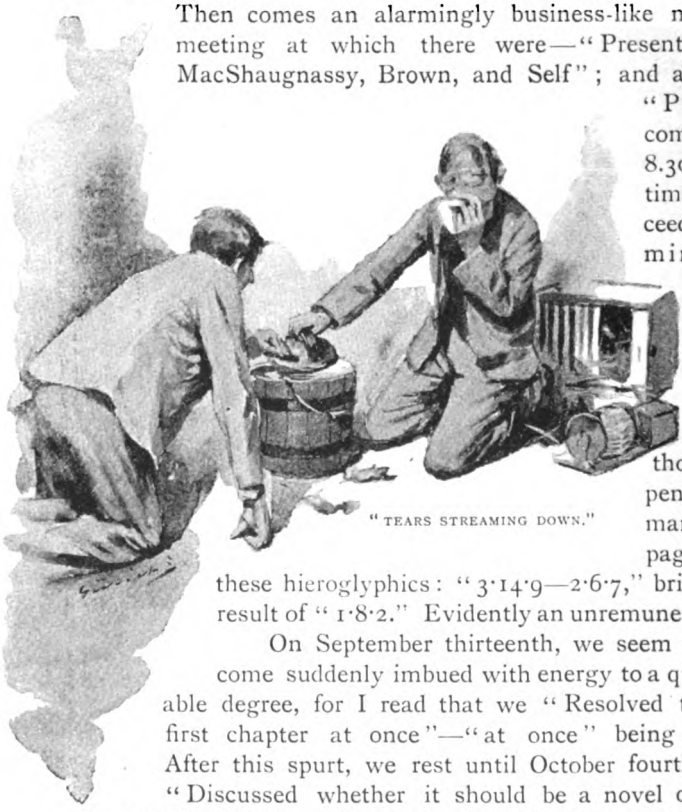
Playgoers' Club on the Church and Stage, and before I left I asked Mr. Toole his opinion on the subject. "Why," he said, "I think that the Church and the Stage have a great deal in common, and I think that they ought to be great friends, but I don't see that we need reforming any more than any other branches of the community. For my own part, I have the greatest respect for the clergy, and a great many friends amongst them, and I always go to church when I can. I am very fond of going to Westminster Abbey. I like the music; it's so solemn, you know—it always stirs me. I was very much amused at an incident which occurred to me the other day. I was playing in York, so on Sunday I went to the Minster as usual; on the following day, a man I knew came up to me and said, quite in good faith, 'Why, I saw you in church yesterday, and you were behaving quite quietly!' Just as though he had expected me to go in costume, and behave as though I were on the stage. But that is one of the ridiculous ideas that people get into their heads about actors. Still, I think, all that kind of thing is dying down now-a-days."

Novel Notes.

By Jerome K. Jerome. Illustrations by J. Gülich.

PART XII.

HOW much more of our—fortunately not very valuable—time we devoted to this wonderful novel of ours I cannot exactly say. Turning the dogs'-eared leaves of the dilapidated diary that lies before me, I find the record of our later gatherings confused and incomplete. For weeks there does not appear a single word. Then comes an alarmingly business-like minute of a meeting at which there were—"Present: Jephson, MacShaugnassy, Brown, and Self"; and at which the "Proceedings commenced at 8.30." At what time the "proceedings" terminated, and what business was done, the chronicle, however, sayeth not; though, faintly pencilled in the margin of the page, I trace these hieroglyphics: "3·14·9—2·6·7," bringing out a result of "1·8·2." Evidently an unremunerative night.



"TEARS STREAMING DOWN."

On September thirteenth, we seem to have become suddenly imbued with energy to a quite remarkable degree, for I read that we "Resolved to start the first chapter at once"—"at once" being underlined. After this spurt, we rest until October fourth, when we "Discussed whether it should be a novel of plot or of character," without—so far as the diary affords indication—arriving at any definite decision. I observe that on the same day, "Mac told story about a man who accidentally bought a camel at a

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sale." Details of the story are, however, wanting, which, perhaps, is fortunate for the reader.

On the sixteenth, we were still debating the character of our hero; and I see that I suggested "a man of the Charley Buswell type."

Poor Charley, I wonder what could have made me think of him in connection with heroes; his lovableness, I suppose—certainly not his heroic qualities. I can recall his boyish face now (it was always a boyish face), the tears streaming down it as he sat in the schoolyard beside a bucket, in which he was drowning three white mice and a tame rat. I sat down opposite and cried too, while helping him to hold a saucepan lid over the poor little creatures, and thus there sprang up a friendship between us, which grew.

Over the grave of these murdered rodents, he took a solemn oath never to break school rules again, by keeping either white mice or tame rats, but to devote the whole of his energies for the future to pleasing his masters, and affording his parents some satisfaction for the money being spent upon his education.

Seven weeks later, the pervadence throughout the dormitory of an atmospheric effect more curious than pleasing led to the discovery that he had converted his box into a rabbit hutch. Confronted with eleven kicking witnesses, and reminded of his former promises, he explained that rabbits were not mice, and seemed to consider that a new and vexatious regulation had been sprung upon him. The rabbits were confiscated. What was their ultimate fate, we never knew with certainty, but three days later we were given rabbit-pie for dinner. To comfort him I endeavoured to assure him that these could not be his rabbits. He, however, convinced that they were, cried steadily into his plate all the time that he was eating them, and afterwards, in the playground, had a stand-up fight with a fourth form boy who had requested a second helping.

That evening he performed another solemn oath-taking, and for the next month was the model boy of the school. He read tracts, sent his spare pocket-money to assist in annoying the heathen, and subscribed to "The Young Christian" and "The Weekly Rambler, an Evangelical Miscellany" (whatever that may mean). An undiluted course of this pernicious literature naturally created in him a desire towards the opposite extreme. He suddenly dropped "The Young Christian" and "The Weekly Rambler," and purchased penny dreadfuls; and, taking no further interest in the welfare of the heathen, saved up and bought a

second-hand revolver and a hundred cartridges. His ambition, he confided to me, was to become "a dead shot," and the marvel of it is that he did not succeed.

Of course, there followed the usual discovery and consequent trouble, the usual repentance and reformation, the usual determination to start a new life.

"A DEAD SHOT."

Poor fellow, he lived "starting a new life." Every New Year's Day he would start a new life—on his birthday—on other people's birthdays. I fancy that, later on, when he came to know their importance, he extended the principle to quarter days. "Tidying up, and starting afresh," he always called it.

I think as a young man he was better than most of us. But he lacked that great gift which is the distinguishing feature of the English-speaking race all the world over, the gift of hypocrisy. He seemed incapable of doing the slightest thing without getting found out; a grave misfortune for a man to suffer from, this.

Dear simple-hearted fellow, it never occurred to him that he was as other men—with, perhaps, a dash of straightforwardness added; he regarded himself as a monster of depravity. One evening I found him in his chambers engaged upon his Sisyphean labour of "tidying up." A heap of letters, photographs, and bills lay before him. He was tearing them up and throwing them into the fire.

I came towards him, but he stopped me. "Don't come near me," he cried, "don't touch me. I'm not fit to shake hands with a decent man."

It was the sort of speech to make one feel hot and uncomfortable. I did not know what to answer, and murmured something about his being no worse than the average.

"Don't talk like that," he answered excitedly; "you say that to comfort me, I know; but I don't like to hear it. If I thought other men were like me I should be ashamed of being a man. I've been a blackguard, old fellow, but, please God, it's not too late. To-morrow morning I begin a new life."

He finished his work of destruction, and then rang the bell, and sent his man downstairs for a bottle of champagne.

"My last drink," he said, as we clicked glasses. "Here's to the old life out, and the new life in."

He took a sip and flung the glass with the remainder into the fire. He was always a little theatrical, especially when most in earnest.

For a long while after that I saw nothing of him. Then, one evening, sitting down to supper at a restaurant, I noticed him opposite to me in company that could hardly be called doubtful. He flushed and came over to me. "I've been an old woman for nearly six months," he said, with a laugh. "I find I can't stand it any longer.

"IN COMPANY THAT COULD HARDLY BE CALLED DOUBTFUL"

"After all," he continued, "what is life for but to live? It's only hypocritical to try and be a thing we are not. And do you know"—he leant across the table, speaking earnestly—"honestly and seriously, I'm a better man—I feel it and know it—when I am my natural self than when I am trying to be an impossible saint."

That was the mistake he made; he always ran to extremes. He thought that an oath, if it were only big enough, would frighten away Human Nature, instead of serving only as a challenge to it. Accordingly, each reformation was more intemperate than the last, to be duly followed by a greater swing of the pendulum in the opposite direction.

Being now in a thoroughly reckless mood, he went the pace rather hotly. Then, one evening, without any previous warning, I had a note from him. "Come round and see me on Thursday. It is my wedding eve."

I went. He was once more "tidying up." All his drawers were open, and on the table were piled packs of cards, betting books, and much written paper, as before, all in course of demolition.

I smiled; I could not help it, and, no way abashed, he laughed his usual hearty, honest laugh.

"I know," he exclaimed gaily, "but this is not the same as the others."

Then, laying his hand on my shoulder, and speaking with the sudden seriousness that comes so readily to shallow natures, he said, "God has heard my prayer, old friend. He knows I am weak. He has sent down an angel out of heaven to help me."

He took her portrait from the mantelpiece and handed it me. It seemed to me the face of a hard, narrow woman, but, of course, he raved about her.

As he talked, there fluttered to the ground from the heap before him an old restaurant bill, and, stooping, he picked it up and held it in his hand, musing.

"Have you ever noticed how the scent of the champagne and the candles seems to cling to these things?" he said lightly, sniffing carelessly at it. "I wonder what's become of her?"

"I think I wouldn't think about her at all to-night," I answered.

He loosened his hand, letting the paper fall into the fire.

"My God!" he cried, vehemently, "when I think of all the wrong I have done—the irreparable, ever-widening ruin I have perhaps brought into the world—O God! spare me a long life that I may make amends. Every hour, every minute of it shall be devoted to your service."

As he stood there, with his eager boyish eyes upraised, a light seemed to fall upon his face and illumine it. I had pushed the photograph back to him, and it lay upon the table before him. He knelt and pressed his lips to it.

"With your help, my darling; and His," he murmured.

The next morning he was married. She was a well-meaning girl, though her piety, as with most people, was of the negative order; and her antipathy to things evil much stronger than her sympathy with things good. For a much longer time than I had expected she kept him straight—perhaps, a little too straight. But at last there came the inevitable relapse.

I called upon him, in answer to an excited message, and found him in the depths of despair. It was the old story, human weakness, combined with lamentable lack of the most ordinary precautions against being found out. He gave me details, interspersed with exuberant denunciations of himself, and I undertook the delicate task of peacemaker.

It was a weary work, but eventually she consented to forgive him. His joy, when I told him, was boundless.

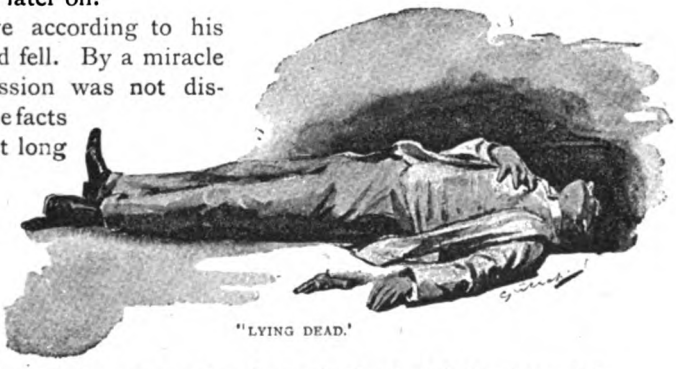
"How good women are," he said, while the tears came into his eyes. "But she shall not repent it. Please God, from this day forth, I'll——"

He stopped, and for the first time in his life the doubt of himself crossed his mind. As I sat watching him, the joy died out of his face, and the first hint of age passed over it.

"I seem to have been 'tidying up and starting afresh' all my life," he said, wearily; "I'm beginning to see where the untidiness lies, and the only way to get rid of it.'

I did not understand the meaning of his words at the time, but learnt it later on.

He strove according to his strength, and fell. By a miracle his transgression was not discovered. The facts came to light long afterwards, but at the time there were only two who knew.



"LYING DEAD."

It was his last failure. Late one evening I received a hurriedly scrawled note from his wife begging me to come round.

"A terrible thing has happened," it ran; "Charley went up to his study after dinner, saying he had some 'tidying up,' as he calls it, to do, and did not wish to be disturbed. In clearing out his desk he must have handled carelessly the revolver that he always keeps there, not remembering, I suppose, that it was loaded. We heard a report, and on rushing into the room found him lying dead on the floor. The bullet had passed right through his heart."

Hardly the type of man for a hero! And yet I do not know. Perhaps he fought harder than many a man who conquers. In the world's courts, we are compelled to judge on circumstantial evidence only, and the chief witness, the man's soul, cannot very well be called.

I remember the subject of bravery being discussed one evening at a dinner party, when a German gentleman present related an anecdote, the hero of which was a young Prussian officer.

"I cannot give you his name," our German friend explained—"the man himself told me the story in confidence; and though he personally, by virtue of his after record, could afford to have it known, there are other reasons why it should not be bruited about.

"How I learnt it was in this way. For a dashing exploit performed during the brief war against Austria he had been presented with the Iron Cross. This, as you are well aware, is the most highly-prized decoration in the German Army; men who have earned it are usually conceited about it, and, indeed, have some excuse for being so. He, on the contrary, kept his locked in a drawer of his desk, and never wore it except when compelled by official etiquette. The mere sight of it seemed to be painful to him. One day I asked him the reason. We are very old and close friends, and he told me.

"The incident occurred when he was a young lieutenant. Indeed, it was his first engagement. By some means or another he had become separated from his company, and, unable to regain it, had attached himself to a Landwehr regiment stationed at the extreme right of the Prussian lines.

"The enemy's effort was mainly directed against the left centre, and for a while our young lieutenant was nothing more than a distant spectator of the battle. Suddenly, however, the attack shifted, and the regiment found itself occupying an extremely important and critical position. The shells began to fall unpleasantly near, and the order was given to 'grass.'

"The men fell upon their faces and waited. The shells ploughed the ground around them, smothering them with dirt. A horrible, griping pain started in my young friend's stomach, and began creeping upwards. His head and heart both seemed to be shrinking and growing cold. A shot tore off the head of the man next to him, sending the blood spurting into his face; a minute later another ripped open the back of a poor fellow lying to the front of him.

"His body seemed not to belong to himself at all. A strange, shrivelled creature seemed to have taken possession of it. He raised his head, and peered about him. He and three soldiers—youngsters, like himself, who had never before been under fire—appeared to be utterly alone in that hell. They were the end men of the regiment, and the configuration of the ground completely hid them from their comrades.

"They glanced at each other, these four, and read each other's

thoughts in each other's eyes. Leaving their rifles lying on the grass, they commenced to crawl stealthily upon their bellies, the lieutenant leading, the other three following.

"Some few hundred yards in front of them rose a small, steep hill. If they could reach this it would shut them out of sight. They hastened on, pausing every thirty yards or so to lie still and pant for breath, then hurrying on again, quicker than before, tearing their flesh against the broken ground.

"At last they reached the base of the slope, and slinking a little way round it, raised their heads and looked back. Where they were it was impossible for them to be seen from the German lines.

"They sprang to their feet and broke into a wild race. A dozen steps further they came face to face with an Austrian field battery.

"COMMENCED TO CRAWL STEALTHILY."

"The demon that had taken possession of them had been growing stronger and stronger the further and further they had fled. They were not men, they were animals mad with fear. Driven by the same frenzy that prompted other panic-stricken creatures to once rush down a steep place into the sea, these four men, with a yell, flung themselves, sword in hand, upon the whole battery; and the whole battery, bewildered by the suddenness and unexpectedness of the attack, thinking the entire battalion was upon them, gave way, and rushed pell-mell down the hill.

"With the sight of those flying Austrians the fear, as independently as it had come to him, left him, and he felt only a desire to hack and kill. The four Prussians flew after them, cutting and stabbing at them as they ran; and when the Prussian cavalry came thundering up, they found my young lieutenant and his three friends had captured two guns and accounted for half a score of the enemy.

"Next day, he was summoned to headquarters.

"'Will you be good enough to remember for the future, sir,' said the Chief of the Staff, 'that His Majesty does not require his lieutenants to execute manœuvres on their own responsibility, and also that to attack a battery with three men is not war, but damned tomfoolery. You ought to be court-martialled, sir!'

"Then, in somewhat different tones, the old soldier added, his face softening into a smile: 'However, alertness and daring, my young friend, are good qualities, especially when crowned with success. If the Austrians had once succeeded in planting a battery on that hill it might have been difficult to dislodge them. Perhaps, under the circumstances, His Majesty may overlook your indiscretion.'

"'His Majesty not only overlooked it, but bestowed upon me the Iron Cross,' concluded my friend. 'For the credit of the army, I judged it better to keep quiet and take it. But, as you can understand, the sight of it does not recall very pleasurable reflections.'"

To return to my diary, I see that on November fourteenth we held another meeting. But at this there were present only "Jephson, MacShaugnassy, and Self"; and of Brown's name I find henceforth no further trace. On Christmas Eve we three met again, and my notes inform me that MacShaugnassy brewed some whiskey-punch, according to a recipe of his own, a record suggestive of a sad Christmas for all three of us. No particular business appears to have been accomplished on either occasion.

Then there is a break until February eighth, and the assemblage has shrunk to "Jephson and Self." With a final flicker, as of a dying candle, my diary at this point, however, grows luminous, shedding much light upon that evening's conversation.

Our talk seems to have been of many things—of most things, in fact, except our novel. Among other subjects we spoke of literature generally.

"I am tired of this eternal cackle about books," said Jephson; "these columns of criticism to every line of writing; these endless books about books; these shrill praises and shrill denunciations; this silly worship of novelist Tom; this silly hate of poet Dick; this silly squabbling over playwright Harry. There is no soberness, no sense in it all. One would think, to listen to the High Priests of Culture, that man was made for literature, not literature for man. Thought existed before the Printing Press; and the men who wrote the best hundred books never read them. Books have their place in the world, but they are not its purpose They are things

side by side with beef and mutton, the scent of the sea, the touch of a hand, the memory of a hope, and all the other items in the sum total of our three-score years and ten. Yet we speak of them as though they were the voice of life instead of merely its faint, distorted echo. Tales are delightful *as* tales—sweet as primroses after the long winter, restful as the cawing of rooks at sunset. But we do not write 'tales' now; we prepare 'human documents' and dissect souls."

He broke off abruptly in the midst of his tirade. "Do you know what these 'psychological studies' that are so fashionable just now always make me think of?" he said. "One monkey examining another monkey for fleas.

"And what, after all, does our dissecting pen lay bare?" he continued. "Human nature? or merely some more or less unsavoury undergarment, disguising and disfiguring human nature? There is a story told of an elderly tramp, who, overtaken by misfortune, was compelled to retire for a while to the seclusion of Portland. His hosts, desiring to see as much as possible of their guest during his limited stay with them, proceeded to bath him. They bathed him twice a day for a week, each time learning more of him; until at last they reached a flannel shirt. And with that they had to be content, soap and water proving powerless to go further.

"'REMEMBER FOR THE FUTURE, SIR.'"

"That tramp appears to me symbolical of mankind. Human Nature has worn its conventions for so long that its habit has grown on to it. In this nineteenth century it is impossible to say where the clothes of custom end and the man begins. Our virtues are taught to us as a branch of 'Deportment'; our vices are the recognised vices of our reign and set. Our religion hangs ready made beside our cradle to be buttoned upon us by loving hands. Our tastes we acquire, with difficulty; our sentiments we learn by rote. At cost of infinite suffering, we study to love whiskey and cigars, high art and classical music. In one age we admire Byron and drink sweet champagne: twenty years later it is more

fashionable to prefer Shelley, and we like our champagne dry. At school we are told that Shakespeare was a great poet, and that the Venus di Medici is a fine piece of sculpture; and so for the rest of our lives we go about saying what a great poet we think Shakespeare, and that there is no piece of sculpture, in our opinion, so fine as the Venus di Medici. If we are Frenchmen we adore our mother; if Englishmen we love dogs and virtue. We grieve for the death of a near relative twelve months; but for a second cousin, we sorrow only three. The good man has his regulation excellencies to strive after, his regulation sins to repent of. I knew a good man who was quite troubled because he was not proud, and could not, therefore, with any reasonableness, pray for humility. In society one must needs be cynical and mildly wicked: in Bohemia orthodoxly unorthodox. I remember my mother expostulating with a friend, an actress, who had left a devoted husband and eloped with a disagreeable, ugly, little low comedian (I am speaking of long, long ago).

"'YOU MUST BE MAD.'

"'You must be mad,' said my mother; 'what on earth induced you to take such a step?'

"'My dear Emma,' replied the lady; 'what else was there for me? You know I can't act. I had to do *something* to show I was an artiste!'

"We are dressed up marionnettes. Our voice is the voice of

the unseen showman, Convention; our very movements of passion and pain are but in answer to his jerk. A man resembles one of those gigantic bundles that one sees in nursemaids' arms. It is very bulky and very long; it looks a mass of delicate lace and rich fur and fine woven stuffs; and somewhere, hidden out of sight among the finery, there is a tiny red bit of bewildered humanity, with no voice but a foolish cry.

"There is but one story," he went on, after a long pause, uttering his own thoughts aloud rather than speaking to me. "We sit at our desks and think and think, and write and write, but the story is ever the same. Men told it and men listened to it many years ago; we are telling it to one another to-day; we shall be telling it to one another a thousand years hence; and the story is: 'Once upon a time there lived a man and a woman who loved him.' The little critic cries that it is not new, and asks for something fresh, thinking—as children do—that there are strange things in the world."

At that point, my notes end, and there is nothing in the book beyond. Whether any of us thought any more of the novel, whether we ever met again to discuss it, whether it were ever begun, whether it were ever abandoned—I cannot say. There is a fairy story that I read many, many years ago that has never ceased to haunt me. It told how a little boy once climbed a rainbow. And at the end of the rainbow he came to the most wonderful land that was ever dreamt of. Its houses were built of gold, and its streets were paved with silver. Its palaces were so beautiful that no language could describe them, but to merely look at them satisfied all yearnings. And all the men who dwelt in this city were great and good; and the women fairer than the women of a boy's dream. And the name of the city was "The city of things men meant to do."

The Story of an Hour.

By Hilda Newman.

Illustrations by V. W. Newman.

AND this is the end of it all!

The sharp queries and sullen answers, the sobs, tears, and bickerings are over, and in their stead reigns the cold silence of resolution.

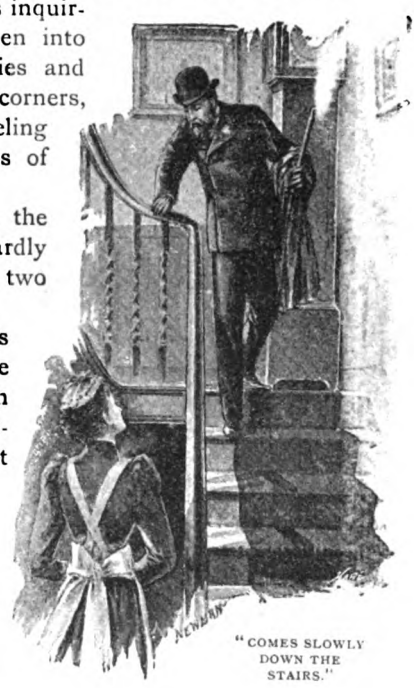
How did it all begin? Neither could tell. Yet the torture of an unworthy suspicion, and a pride that scorns to answer the doubts of an exacting love, have apparently sufficed to obliterate the memory of the happiness of three unclouded years of kindness and love.

"IDLY LOOKING OUT OF THE WINDOW."

They are going to separate. There is nothing else to do, She says, and He tacitly agrees, for he knows it is impossible to go on living in this atmosphere of discontent. And they calmly arrange their affairs, as though it were merely a question of a few weeks' absence, instead of the breaking up of their home. He will travel, and She will stay on at their house a little longer, till her mother goes abroad, when she will join her, dismissing all the servants, excepting the old nurse who looks after their child. Ah! it is the thought of their child that makes the separation so hard, and He feels that the last link between them is broken, when he yields that little life into the hands of the wife who does not trust him, thinking bitterly in his heart that he may be taught to hate him.

She sits in the drawing-room, idly looking out of the window, surprised at the dead calm that seems to have come over the

house. An organ is playing in the street, and the notes jar on her strained nerves till she could scream; but she sits still with her hands in her lap, trying to believe that she is utterly indifferent to present, past, or future, yet unconsciously listening to the hurried, heavy footsteps overhead, where her husband is packing his portmanteau. She is quite anxious for a moment as she remembers she has put away his fur-lined coat that might be useful if he goes travelling in chilly regions, but she recollects herself with a start, and does not stir from her seat. She lets the bitter thoughts come uppermost in her heart now, for she is convinced, of course, that this parting is the best thing that could take place. Upstairs He, quite helpless as to the locality of many necessaries that have hitherto been prepared for him by thoughtful hands, and not feeling able to confront his servant's inquiring eyes, is savagely thrusting linen into an unwilling receptacle, whence ties and collars stick out provokingly at odd corners, and trying to subdue a queer feeling that oppresses him when he thinks of her stony indifference.



"COMES SLOWLY DOWN THE STAIRS."

So the packing goes on, and the organ grinds merrily, and is inwardly but emphatically cursed by at least two ungrateful people.

At last He is ready, and comes slowly down the stairs, giving some very audible and offhand orders in the hall respecting his particular belongings. A close observer might notice that he speaks and laughs a little too readily. The little, pale woman, sitting motionless in the room, hears him, and in her heart of hearts hears what he strives to hide.

After all, it is a great wrench for a man to leave his—well, then, whose fault is it? And the old arguments and suspicions rise again in her mind and deaden all other feelings.

He comes into the drawing-room, hat in hand, very firm and very calm. She does not move.

"Good-bye," he says, holding out his hand.

"Good-bye," she answers, taking it mechanically.

He pauses at the door, and their eyes meet. "It is much better so," she says, faintly. And he is gone.

Then there is a rushing and singing in her ears. The notes of the organ rise louder and louder, till they swell into a rich anthem—the garish daylight changes to the dim light of a church—she walks up the aisle in a glistening white dress, on which pearldrops shake and tremble. She hears a dim murmur of voices and rustling of garments, and the scent of white flowers is heavy in the air. There rises a clear voice, whose fervour moves her inmost heart, exhorting her to love, honour and obey—and out of the fulness of her soul she promises. *Oh! God, oh! God, she meant to keep that promise.*

Then comes a confused din of voices and rolling of carriages, but she is only conscious of the strong arm to which she clings, and the dear face that bends so tenderly over hers.

"A WHITE, WILD-LOOKING FACE."

With a little sobbing gasp she opens her eyes. Has she been asleep? No, but the organ has stopped and is rumbling down the street, followed by a crowd of small boys and girls, whose ears are not sensitive to the quality of music.

She rises. Her knees are shaking as she drags herself painfully across the room, catching a glimpse of a white, wild-looking face in the tall pier-glass as she clutches the handle of the door, and then the sight of the empty hat-rack in the hall, the absence of coat and stick, or fragrant whiff of cigar, bring the irrevocableness of the parting home to her more vividly than anything—more than the few words of farewell, the cold handshake, and the slam of the hall door half-an-hour ago. "Was it only half-an-hour?" she murmurs, staring stupidly at the clock; "it seems an eternity! And now he is going farther and farther from me,

never to return—never to tease, and praise and love me, for (she sobs) he did love me once, in spite of everything—never to laugh at me and call me 'little woman'—never to hold my hand or ask my help again! He is thinking of his wasted life and love; yes, he will believe he has wasted it on *me*. He is thinking of our little child—he did not bid him good-bye—how could he bear to?" Ah! there is still something left for her to love; but what is left for him? And with bitter tears she remembers how quietly he gave the child up to her, and how she accepted the sacrifice as a matter of course, though she knew what it cost him.

With beating heart she goes upstairs. The cosy, pretty nursery is empty. The nurse has taken the child to Kensington Gardens as usual. She passes on into their bedroom. It is still in disorder, and she has not the heart to put it straight, though she feels that a little occupation would do her good. The sun shines warmly into the room, but she shivers.

"THE NURSERY IS EMPTY."

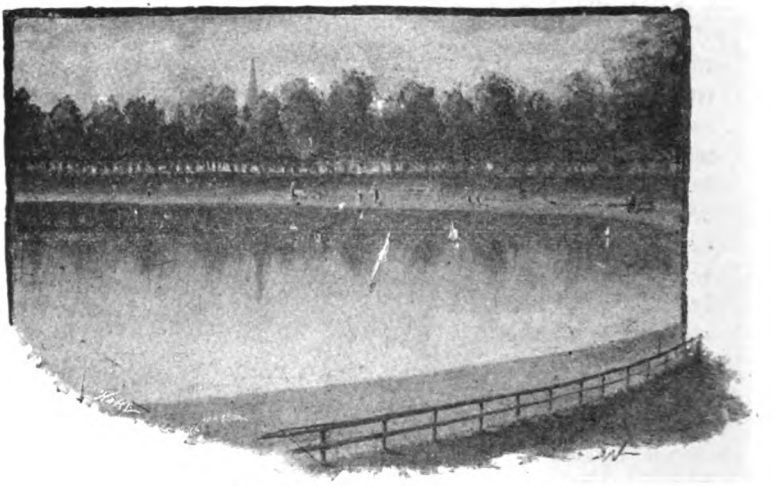
There is nothing but loneliness in the house, and that she cannot bear, for it brings thoughts, and she dares not think.

Hardly knowing what she does, she finds and puts on her hat and gloves, and turns to go, but, at the very threshold, she stumbles over something—why, it is the little silver match-box he always uses—and loses. She must take it to him—then she remembers, and, oh! strange woman, covers it with tears and kisses. She hurries down the stairs, and out of the house, and a

long way down the street before she knows that she is hurrying, because she cannot bear to be alone. An awful feeling of restlessness, of reproach, will not let her be still, and yet she was so calm a little while ago.

On—on—regardless of curious looks, for her cheeks are tear-stained, and now and then there is a little catch in her breath, that she cannot repress.

On—past the quaint old red brick palace, whose history they read together, past the pond with its toy navy and anxious captains,



"THE POND AND ITS TOY NAVY."

past nursemaids, children, and mooning philosophers she hurries, feverishly longing to reach the chosen nook where a joyous welcome awaits her.

Now she is near—but the seat is empty, and the nurse is gossiping in the distance. She runs on angrily—and stops! For, under a sheltering tree, He stands bidding their little child good-bye. She can hear his gentle words, and the soft, cooing answers, and she dumbly stretches out her arms, as a great wave of love surges in her heart and drowns the bitter thoughts for ever. In a little while he will go, and then this tide of love and repentance will have come too late.

She calls him faintly—and he turns. Her hat is awry, her hair coming down, and she has torn her pretty dress on some pro-

jecting branch, yet He thinks she never looked more beautiful, as he answers the mute appeal of those tearful eyes, and takes her in his arms. Deep silence reigns. Then, from the depths of a penitent heart, she sobs out loving, passionate words: "Forgive me—my husband!"

"'FORGIVE ME—MY HUSBAND!'"

Rum Punch at Podbury's.

By Eden Phillpotts.

Illustrations by Ronald Gray.

SOME West Indian insects have an almost human strength of purpose. For three consecutive nights I suffered from a sort of vampire cockroach, who crept under my pyjamas whilst I slept, and nibbled my chest. When I awoke, I could feel him hurrying off by way of my arm or leg. The moment worn-out nature re-asserted itself in me, and I dozed again, that ghoul of a cockroach came back and proceeded with its fell banquet. At length, weakened no doubt by loss of blood and frantic with the thought that a mere piece of determined vermin should thus habitually sup off me, I rose in the dead of a moonless night, turned on the electric light, selected a handy shoe, and then started to have it out, once for all, with that man-eating cockroach. He broke cover from under some curiosities, and went away at a killing pace. But I had stopped his "earths" all round the cabin, and after a ten minutes' burst in the open, he settled down, evidently feeling that I meant business. Though not his equal in pace, I hoped to find myself a better stayer. He caught my eye once, when he was jumping over my sponge with a view to getting into some very difficult country under my bunk. The expression in it evidently alarmed him, and he redoubled his efforts. Twice I had made play with the shoe. Once I nearly landed him upon the side of his head; the other time I broke a rather valuable curiosity. Finally, the cockroach began to fly; then, for a while, he had matters his own way. I struck out to the right and left with a view to winging him, but he certainly showed great ability in the air, and dodged under the shoe and over it, and then hit me in the face, and was out again before I could get a blow back. Now, from being a sort of fox-hunt, the

affair had degenerated into a prize-fight; and it seemed utterly impossible to say who would win. On the one side were ranged weight and science and a shoe; on the other, wings and astounding agility and utter unscrupulosity. After the first round, I heard people in adjacent cabins waking up and murmuring unkind things—not about the cockroach, but concerning me. Then I called "Time," and walked out to the centre of the room. The cockroach did not come. I looked round and saw him sitting in my open port, twirling his moustache and gazing out upon the sea. I said "Time" again, but he paid no attention; so I stole upon him, with the stealth of a wild Indian, and smote him behind. This action was unsportsmanlike, but conclusive. He shot out into the ocean, where probably some not over-particular tropic fish attempted to digest him and failed.

"SMOTE HIM BEHIND."

As the "Rhine" approached Dominica, the Fourth Officer, according to his pleasant custom, approached me, armed with facts. On this occasion, however, I had taken measures to be before him. I had read up the island rather carefully, and, knowing that Columbus was always a safe card, had acquired some information on the subject of that great navigator also. So I waited with quiet confidence for the Fourth Officer to start. He said:

"Here we are at Dominica—an interesting and beautiful spot."

"True," I replied, "Christopher Columbus discovered the place in 1493."

The Fourth Officer looked startled and uneasy, but I pushed on:

"The French and hurricanes between them have done much to wreck this island's chances. Matters, however, are more hopeful now. Dominica abounds in sulphur springs, and vast sulphurous accumulations occur inland. Even the bed of the River Roseau is not free from these volcanic outbursts. Formerly the place produced very famous and high-class coffee, but this cultivation was ruined by an insect pest. Now, you shall find that sugar-cane, cocoa, and limejuice are the principal products. The

manioc root, of which cassava bread is made, also grows abundantly here, and basket work is rather an important industry too. In the year 1881, there were still a hundred and seventy-three pure aboriginal Caribs left in Dominica, but they have not been counted lately. I don't fancy they like it. The port of the isle is Roseau, named after the river. We shall presently anchor off this town. I don't know that there is anything more to say."

Then I looked at the Fourth Officer inquiringly. He was evidently hurt. He said:

"No, I don't fancy that there *is* anything more to say." Then he shook his head rather reproachfully, and walked off to the other end of the ship. In fact, he went as far away from me as he possibly could without getting into the sea. I felt sorry, and followed him, and begged him to tell me about his younger days, when he was an apprentice, and first sailed the ocean. This cheered him up, and he recounted a mad freak off Cape Horn by night. It happened that another sailing ship was following his vessel, so he and a friend began hanging out signal lamps to her, and waving green and blue and yellow and crimson lights over the stern of their ship. The approaching barque stood this display for some time, and then, probably under the impression she was running into a chemist's shop, grew frightened, and changed her course, and was no more seen. Our Fourth Officer, I should think rightly, regards this as one of his happiest efforts.

"THE FOURTH OFFICER LOOKED STARTLED AND UNEASY."

The Doctor has already arranged a programme for Roseau. One Podbury dwells there, and this Podbury brews the best rum punch in the West Indies. The Doctor knows and esteems him. My brother is also familiar with the Bishop of Dominica, and says that he is a genial, lovable Irishman of admirable parts, and the best company in the world. It is agreed, therefore, that we first

call upon the Bishop, then see the town, and finally cheer our exhausted systems with Podbury's rum punch. Neither the Bishop nor Podbury has invited us, or knows we are here at all; but that is a sort of detail which counts for nothing in foreign parts.

Dominica is very beautiful, with the same beauty as many other islands already mentioned. Great wooded hills rise, peak upon peak, to the clouds, and between them lie deep gorges and fertile ravines. The margins of the sea are fringed with palms; Roseau itself lies glimmering upon the shore, with white walls and red and grey roofs. Inland, winding out under low cliffs behind the town, flows forth the river over a rocky bed to the sea. This stream produces some very noble scenery towards the interior, and is rather a large volume of water for such a small island. As a result Dominica is extremely damp at seasons of much rain, and grows, among other things, frogs of majestic size.

"THE DOCTOR WAS FUSSING ABOUT."

By kind permission of the Captain, I was allowed to avail myself of the mail-boat at all ports; and now, tumbling into this vessel, the Doctor and I soon reached dry land.

"Let us bolt straight off to the Cathedral," he said; "ten to one the Bishop's there; if not, we can go on to his house."

Roseau appeared to be rather a languishing little town. The stony streets were all overgrown with grass; the place generally lacked any air of enterprise; the negro children, who swarmed everywhere, were more than usually destitute of attire.

Upon reaching the Bishop's place of business, we found to our dismay that a funeral was going on. The Cathedral doors were wide open, a crowd was gathered within, and over a flower-laden bier stood the Bishop, singing away, and as fully occupied as a man could be.

I noticed that the Doctor was fussing about, trying to catch his friend's eye. I therefore said:

"Don't; it isn't decent. You can't expect even a bishop to be genial and effusive at a time like this. Consider the survivors."

"He sees me!" whispered my brother.

"Sees you; yes, not being blind he couldn't help it. Everybody in the Cathedral sees you; and they very naturally resent the sight. Come away; you're making the Bishop nervous."

It really was most annoying. There he stood, so close that we could almost touch him, and yet separated from us by a gulf only to be bridged by the end of his burial service.

"WE MET PODBURY."

The Doctor became illogical and childish about it. When I had dragged him away from these last sad rites, he gave it as his opinion that any other bishop would have stopped, just for a moment at least, and been friendly and enthusiastic, if only in an undertone.

"He may get thousands of opportunities to bury people, but he will never have a chance of seeing you again," said my brother. Then he added, as an afterthought, "And very probably you will never get another opportunity of talking to an Irish bishop."

After that he sneered at the local medical practitioner, and said that likely enough the deceased would not have died at all in proper hands.

Then a thought struck me, the horror of which reduced my brother to absolute despair. I said:

"Perhaps the Bishop is interring Podbury. In that case everybody you know on this island will be busy, and we shan't get any hospitality, or punch, or anything."

"Just my luck if he is," answered the Doctor gloomily. He then kept absolute silence for half-an-hour, during which time we walked to the Roseau River and beheld many black laundresses

out in mid-stream washing clothes. Turning from this spectacle, he spoke again and said :

"Our present state of suspense is destroying me. I've a terrible presentiment that they *were* burying Podbury. If so, we're done all round. I'm going right away to Podbury's now. I shall see in a moment by the blinds if the worst has happened."

We sought out Podbury's desolate home, and the Doctor asked bitterly why Providence should have snatched away one whose skill in the matter of rum punch was a household word. I said:

"Try and feel hopeful. We cannot yet be absolutely certain that he has gone."

And then we met Podbury in the Market Place. He was thoroughly alive, and apparently in good health.

"Ah, Doctor!" he exclaimed, "back again. Glad to see you. How are the boys on the 'Rhine?' Who's your friend?"

I was made known to Podbury, and explained how the sight of him had turned our mourning into joy, and how I had come out from England as much to taste his celebrated rum punch as anything else. He appeared gratified at this, and led the way to his house.

"'MAGNIFICENT!'"

We asked him who the Bishop was burying, and he did not even know. He said:

"A nigger, for certain. Can't be anybody of much account or I should have heard tell of it."

Then we reached his home, and while he brewed cold punch, we talked to his wife and daughters and some aunts that he had, on his father's side.

The Treasure dropped in too. He knew Podbury well, and Podbury regarded him as an authority on punch. The liquid was presently placed before us. Podbury showed pleasure when I

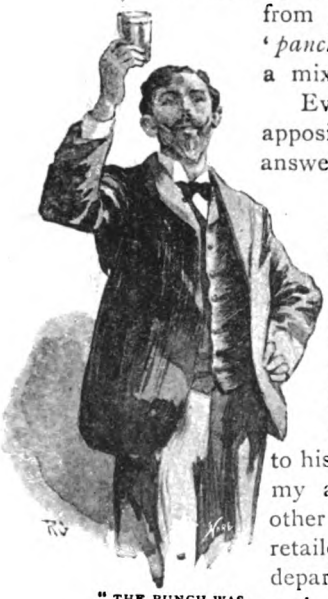
said what I thought about it; but he did not feel quite contented until he had expert's opinion.

"Magnificent!" the Treasure presently declared; "why it's equal to the 1890 brew—you remember."

Podbury's eye brightened at this allusion to one of his greatest past triumphs. He tasted the punch himself, and admitted that it certainly seemed "about right."

With a desire to be entertaining, I volunteered a fact or two concerning punch generally. I said:

"Our word 'punch,' as you are doubtless aware, is derived from the Hindustani '*panch*' or Sanskrit '*panchan*'; which mean simply 'five.' Punch is a mixture of five ingredients, hence the name."



"THE PUNCH WAS GOOD."

Everybody was rather impressed with this apposite remark, excepting Podbury. He answered:

"Yes, that's so. I've known it years and years. You bet what I don't know about punch isn't worth knowing."

This I took to be sheer conceit on the part of Podbury. His successes with punch were making the man egotistical. I did not believe that he had heard of these interesting points before, whatever he said to the contrary. At any rate, they were quite new to his wife and daughters and aunts. So I turned my attention to them, and told them several other things worth knowing. They doubtless retailed my information to Podbury after we had departed. Still the punch was good and cooling, and, with a heart that rises above trifles, I here deliberately bless the man who brewed it. To be thus publicly blessed in print ought to content even Podbury.

When we returned to the "Rhine" night had shaken out her starry skirts, and land and sea were very dark. But great electric eyes glared down from either side of the ship, facilitating the business of loading, and shining upon a struggling crowd of lighters, and a yelling, swearing assembly of negroes. Steam cranes groaned and shrieked and rattled; new passengers were coming aboard, driven to madness with luggage; and sundry Dominica tradesmen bustled about, selling curiosities. These people vended

stuffed frogs, the skins of humming-birds, Brazilian beetles, and gigantic Rhinoceros beetles also.

Five or six of them hemmed in the Doctor immediately he arrived, but, finding that he had already laid in frogs and beetles, they turned upon me with grim determination to do business, or perish in the attempt. My knowledge of the "Rhine" enabled me to escape from all save one, but he was as familiar with our vessel as I, and finally, penning me in a corner, he produced a frog as big as a lap-dog, and declared that it was his almost suicidal intention to practically give me the thing for half-a-dollar. I said:

"No, John. I am perhaps as good a judge of a bull-frog as anybody living, and I tell you without hesitation that your frog is worth ten shillings. Don't dream of parting from it for less."

"'MASSA GIB ME TEN SHILLIN' FOR HIM?'"

He grinned, and asked:

"Massa gib me ten shillin' for him?"

"Again, no, John. I do not need this Goliath of a frog. I am merely valuing the reptile for your future guidance. Let me see those beetles."

He showed me a weird creature, which looked as if nature had begun an insect and then changed her mind and finished it off like a crab. This thing, with the ferocious claw-like nose and chin, was a female Rhinoceros beetle, so the owner explained. The male beetle appeared to be a harmless, mild concern of much smaller size, and with no warlike appendages whatever. I never saw any insect of the sterner sex labour under such crushing disadvantages. Personally, did I belong to this order of coleoptera, I should sing extremely small, and remain a bachelor, and creep or fly about quietly after dark, and not affect ladies' society much. Probably, most gentlemen Rhinoceros beetles do so. It must always be Leap Year with these concerns. If the m[illegible] had to propose, the race would long since have become extinct.

I bought a beetle or two, and then my merchant, with strange pertinacity, returned to the bull-frog. Not far distant stood our Model Man, working for his life. So I said:

"You see that gentleman there—the one ordering everybody about and making so much noise? Take your frog to him, tell him it is a ten-shilling frog, and he will probably buy it on the spot."

But this frog vendor knew the Model Man from experience. He evidently had no inclination to attempt any business with him.

"Dat gem'man no buy nuffing, sar. He berry sharp wid me 'fore to-day."

Indeed, the near presence of the Model Man discouraged my friend to such an extent that he presently withdrew. I told his enemy afterwards, and the Model Man said:

"Offer his beastly frogs to ME! If he had dared to, I should have pitched him into the sea, stock and all. I did once, when he began bothering people to buy things they had no wish for."

"A FULL-BODIED GENTLEMAN."

"Ah," I said, "doubtless he alluded to that circumstance when he told me you had been sharp with him before to-day."

Among the passengers who joined us at Dominica was an old friend, an ample, full-bodied, admirable gentleman who travelled from England with us, and found the ocean extremely monotonous and trying upon the voyage out. The same trouble still dogged his footsteps. He came aboard quite wild and haggard, and declared the universal and appalling lack of variety was telling upon his health.

"Just think of it," he said, "wherever you turn, nothing but negroes and cocoanut palms, cocoanut palms and negroes. Every place is exactly like the last; every palm tree exactly like every other; every negro identical with the rest. I never saw such a monotonous set of islands in my life."

"Look at their beauty," I said.

"I have, until I'm out of all heart with it," he replied. "A pinnacle or two, with clouds round the top; a field of sugar-cane;

hundreds of palms, hundreds of blacks; mean houses and a paltry pier—that's a West Indian island. I liked the first; I tolerated the second; I even bore with the third; but the fourth wearied me; the fifth harrowed me; the sixth sickened me; the seventh—that is this one—has absolutely maddened me; and the eighth or ninth will probably kill me."

I said:

"You ought not to have come here. Why did you?"

"I took advice," he answered drearily. "So-called friends assured me that what I wanted was constant change of scene, with variety and novelty. They asserted that these things were to be found in the West Indies, and I believed them. Look at the climate, too; even that never changes. Look at the sky; English people cannot stand this eternal surface of dead blue. They are not accustomed to it, and it frets their optic nerves. In fact, the whole scheme of things here sets the nervous system on edge from morning till night. There is a cannon somewhere in this steamer, and it will fire in a moment; for no reason, that I can see, except a nautical love of unnecessary noise. These ships cannot come to a place or depart again without firing off their wretched brass guns."

"'WITHOUT FIRING OFF THEIR WRETCHED BRASS GUNS.'"

He went moaning away to his cabin, saying that he never knew one room from another on board ship: they were all so exactly alike; and I proceeded to scan further fresh arrivals.

One party consisted of a man and his wife. They had recently been turned out of Venezuela, upon political grounds, and were now going up to St. Thomas, to meet some friends there and arrange a Revolution. A very pretty little French girl and her mother were also among the passengers. The Treasure knew them well, and, when he heard they were coming, grew excited, and hurried away to shave and change his clothes.

The Treasure's Enchantress was certainly very beautiful, with a slight, trim figure, great wealth of raven hair and flashing eyes. Moreover, she appeared to like him, and told me that he always gave her mother the best cabin in the ship.

There was a scene that night, after we started, between the Treasure and my brother. It happened thus:

The Enchantress proved to be but an indifferent sailor, and sent for the Doctor. He was just starting to comfort her when the Treasure arrived.

"THE TREASURE'S ENCHANTRESS."

"Ill?" he asked. "Ah, I knew she would be, poor girl; she always is. Tell her to drink a pint of salt water. It's the only thing. If that fails, tell her to drink another."

The Doctor immediately showed anger. He said:

"Thanks very much. It saves a medical man such a deal of bother when he has got a chap like you always handy to do the prescriptions. Should you think two pints of salt water would be enough? Hadn't we better say a bucket of it?"

"You may be nasty, but it's none the less true that salt water is right," answered our Treasure. "Just because the thing is a simple, natural remedy, you doctors turn up your noses at it. I know this case better than you do. The girl has often sailed with us. Sea-water is what she wants to steady her. I told her so before dinner."

The Doctor departed, and when he had gone, I asked the Treasure all about his Enchantress. I said:

"Of course it's no business of mine, but I'm very interested in your welfare, and might be useful. Where does she live?"

He answered:

"She has two addresses: one in Martinique and one in Paris. I know them both; but I hardly think I should be justified in divulging them."

"Certainly you would not," I said. "I should be the very last to suggest it."

"It is a little romance in a small way—I mean her life and her mother's. The father was a French Count, and died in a duel. That shows some French duels are properly carried out. She is awfully rich, and not engaged. At least, she doesn't wear a ring. She likes tall men. Of course that's nothing, but I happen to be fond of small women."

"Merely a coincidence," I said, and he looked rather disappointed.

"We think curiously alike in a good many directions," he continued. "I taught her to play deck quoits, and shot a few things for her with my gun. And she gave me a photograph recently."

"'SHE LIKES TALL MEN.'"

"Of herself?" I asked. "Well, no," he admitted, "not exactly that. She takes pictures sometimes in a little pocket camera. She did one of an old negro woman—ugly as sin; but it was not so much the subject as the thought of giving it to me. It argued a friendly feeling—at any rate, a kindly feeling. Don't it strike you so?"

"Undoubtedly it did. You're a lucky man. How far is she going with us?"

"To St. Thomas. She has a temporary address there, by-the-bye. I know that too."

"Go in and win at St. Thomas. I believe it is a certainty for you; I do, indeed."

The Treasure absolutely blushed. He was a very big man indeed, and produced the largest extent of blush I ever saw.

Then my brother came back, looking extremely grave.

"How is she?" we asked simultaneously.

"Very ill," he answered shortly. "She was all right when we started, and never better in her life; but, after dinner, she drank half a wineglass of salt water, and the natural result has been disaster. I understand some fool urged her to try this as a preventive of *mal-de-mer*. Her mother thinks it must have been a coarse practical joke, and is going to speak to the Captain about it. I wouldn't be the man who prescribed that insane dose for a thousand pounds."

Then an expression of abject dismay stole over the Treasure's face as, despite his great size, he appeared to shrivel and curl up into nothing.

"HE APPEARED TO SHRIVEL AND CURL UP."

My "predicament" was first "awkward," then "foolish." "It was all along of" a woman. I may even say a "woman in white." "I was a pale young curate" then, but of a dissenting type. Twenty-two years of age. Very white in the face. Dark brown hair, enough to fill a mattress. Very high collars, compared with which Mr. Gladstone's are mere suggestions. Huge white neckerchief. Black cloth from top to toe. I was sent to visit an invalid lady somewhere in City Road. A total stranger. Place: A shop. Room: At the tip-top of the house. The last part of the staircase was exceedingly narrow and steep, the stairs themselves little broader than a ladder. Tableau: A lady in bed, the only occupant of the room; a young minister, nearly all head and shirt collar, the rest of him a mere detail; the minister very shy and, as it were, "struck all of a heap" by the novelty of his position. The young minister, nervously shy, sat down, and the woman in white breathed a deep sigh. If my mother could have spoken to me then, it would have been such a comfort. I felt as if up in the clouds and the ladder had been stolen. There was not enough of me to break into perspiration, or I should have broken. I know I should. On this point I will brook no

The Rev. Dr. Parker pays a visit.

contradiction. There I sat. There were but two of us, and oh! I felt so very high up, and so very far from the police. Even the street noises seemed to be in another world, and that world next but one to this. The silence was painful. At length the young mother, not so very, very young, perhaps, turned her large brown eyes upon me in a fixed and devouring way, and I can tell you what she said. Shall I? Can you bear it? I could not. She said, with malignant slowness, "I feel such a strong desire to kill somebody." I was the only "body" in the room. How that young man got out of the chamber I could never tell. He never revisited it. He was in the City Road as if by magic. Did he pray with the woman? Not a word. Or she might have preyed upon him.

* * * *

Burglin recalls an incident.

I remember a couple of incidents, both of which gave me unpleasant dreams for some time. The first was in connection with that noble animal which is so useful to man—when it suits him. I was staying out at the Constantinople fortifications with my friend, Colonel A——, in a delightfully picturesque little Turkish village called Baba Nakatch. We had no drains, no amusements, no post—nothing but an occasional death from typhoid to vary the monotony. When we tired of playing chess, we rode out and inspected fortifications, *i.e.*, my friend the Colonel rode into a place with earthworks round it, majestically acknowledged the salutes of the soldiers, and then rode out again. It generally took four or five hours to go the rounds, and I humbly remained outside each fort, only catching distant glimpses of the frowning guns as I sat on an Arab steed at the entrance, and tried to look military. One day, another Colonel, whose horse was pining for that exercise which his somewhat indolent master felt disinclined to give him, suggested that I should ride his grey charger and "take the devil out of him." I couldn't see any devil in the horse when he was brought round. He was apparently calm and sleepy, and tolerated me for about ten minutes. Then, without any warning, the brute swerved round, and bolted back at a mad gallop in the direction of the village. His mouth was like cast-iron, so I soon gave up pulling at it. The gallop was exhilarating. Why trouble to stop? So I simply sat well back, and awaited events. I hadn't to wait very long. We cut round a corner, and dashed up a muddy lane leading to the stables. Ten yards ahead of me, I suddenly noticed a thick telegraph wire stretched across the road, a little

higher than a horse's shoulders, which had evidently been diverted from its original uses by an ingenious but unprejudiced Turkish soldiery for the purpose of suspending their washed shirts. Rip! rip! *Z—z—z—z*! as I ducked to the saddle-bow, and something scraped across my back with a sound as of rending garments. When I was able to reflect, I found the horse standing almost asleep in the yard, with my soldier-servant respectfully holding my stirrup in his hand. "Shall I sew up the back of the Effendi's jacket?" he placidly remarked; and the incident terminated.

* * * *

Also another.

On the second occasion, I was badly scared. I reached Montreal one hot summer night before the English steamer started. She was timed to leave at three in the morning, and all passengers had to be on board the night before. It was so hot that I was nearly suffocated in the close harbour. When I went down to my cabin I left the door open, put my purse and watch at the foot of the bed, under the mattress, and tumbled off to sleep. There was no light in the cabin, as the steamer was moored alongside the wharf. When I awoke, I lay quite still for a moment, vaguely conscious of impending evil. I could hear someone breathe in the darkness—stealthy steps—then a hand groping lightly about feeling for my throat. It rested there for a moment. There was a momentary tightening of the fingers. Should I keep still, or make an effort? I kept still, trying to breathe naturally. The fingers left my throat, and fumbled under the pillow as if searching for something, then gradually retreated, the breathing of the man became less distinct, and I was alone. With one bound I reached the door, bolted it, and sat down on the floor in a helpless and chaotic condition. The next day a new steward was missing; so were several other things.

* * * *

F. W. Robinson has a predicament.

Oh, yes, I have had my awkward predicament too—you, gentlemen, have not had it all your own way. It happened in "the dead of the night" at a big hotel in a Lancashire watering-place, and my first notice of the forthcoming event was given to me by a loud hammering at the front door. "Gentleman home late, decidedly noisy, and probably drunk," I soliloquised, and was about to resume my slumbers when someone ran along the corridor outside, his or her naked feet sounding oddly enough as

they pattered, at a great rate, past my door. "Somebody ill," was my next thought. "Very ill," was thought number three, as more feet—also in a hurry—went bounding by. "Perhaps a lunatic at large," was my fourth reflection, as various voices sounded in the distance, several of them in a high falsetto. I got out of bed, opened my door, and looked down the corridor towards the big wide staircase in the distance. There was smoke coming along the passage, a smell of burnt wood, and then a woman's voice giving out a bloodcurdling shriek of "Fire!" That was quite enough notice for me. Two minutes afterwards I was downstairs in the hall of that sensational establishment.

* * * *

It necessitates unconventional attire.

I was not alone. I was in a mixed assembly of a hundred men, women, and children, who very quickly became two hundred, presently three hundred, all told; visitors, waiters, chambermaids, hotel officials, huddled together in the most incongruous and comic costumes, and thirty per cent. of them with no costumes at all, unless night-shirts and curl-papers count. I was decorous by comparison. I *had* on a pair of trousers (buttoned up the wrong way, certainly), a billycock hat, a surtout coat, a walking-stick, and no shoes or socks. The hall, being paved with marble, struck exceedingly cold to bare feet, and with a total disregard for other people's property I took down an ulster from a rack, and stood on it until a gentleman from upstairs, who was singularly distraught, emptied a whole pail of water over the balusters under the impression that we were flaring somewhere below there. The conflagration was on the first floor above a shop, which had caught light to begin with, and burned through to the hotel bedrooms. Here were plenty of smoke, plenty of "smother," and a few flames in the corner, but no one knew what might be the end of the business, and we were all prepared to march on to the breezy Parade should the fire gain too much sway over the premises.

* * * *

But is not very serious.

The characters in this little domestic scene I found highly amusing after my first scare, as I have no doubt I was a very amusing spectacle to others. The most agile of the company tore up and down stairs with utensils of all kinds, full of water, from the kitchen; sometimes they fell up the stairs, or clashed against each other, and an awful mess was the consequence. One lady was brought solemnly down in a large clothes basket, fright having deprived

her of the use of her limbs; two men in night-shirts stood against the front door with small portmanteaus under their arms, extremely anxious to be the first to get out alive; one old gentleman, also scantily clad, harangued us from the first landing in a feeble and bleating fashion. "Has any-any-body se-ent for the fiiire brigade?" he asked every two or three minutes, always forgetting that he had been answered in the affirmative. He was sure that the fire brigade had escaped every one's memory but his own, and presently—it *had* seemed a long while—the firemen in their brass helmets arrived, and brought their hose into the premises and lumbered upstairs with it, and the engines began pumping and thumping in the street. A quarter-of-an-hour finished the proceedings so far as one's personal safety was concerned, and by twos, threes, and fours we slunk away to our respective rooms considerably ashamed now of our get-up, and thankful in our hearts that the worst was over.

* * * *

Gribble's predicaments have been very common-place.

Most of my predicaments have been very common-place predicaments, and the ways in which I have got out of them very ordinary and obvious ways. Once, when I was a child in petticoats, I wanted to walk through a tunnel at the same time as an express train, but my nurse ran after me and pulled me back. Once, before I had learnt to swim, I was caught by the tide between Broadstairs and Ramsgate; but some sailors came and took me off in a boat. Once again, I, who cannot claim to be physically robust, was challenged to single combat by a truculent Belgian miner of six foot three, with whom I had refused to drink pecquet; but a steam tram happened to pass opportunely, and I escaped in it. Lastly, there was my Alpine brigand. He, with all his faults, was picturesque.

* * * *

With one exception.

I believe—and I shall be glad to be contradicted if I am mistaken—that I am the only living man who has ever been "stuck up" by a brigand in the middle of a glacier. I had no idea that the man was a brigand until, by behaving as such, he gave himself away; otherwise, I have no doubt I should have risen to the occasion and taken to my heels. As it was, he gave me, as the gods gave Demodocus, "both good and evil." That is to say, he deprived me of my money, leaving me in exchange a new sensation, and something interesting to write about. If I were to generalise about brigands,

I should do so thus: Brigands, I should say, are of medium height, slightly but firmly built; they wear mutton-chop whiskers, and are dressed in brown; they carry their luggage—their shaving tackle, I suppose, and their pyjamas—in red and white handkerchiefs slung behind their backs; their appearance is ferocious, and they go about with guns. They spend most of their time sitting on the lateral moraines, pretending to be chamois-hunters. When they see solitary strangers, they come down on to the glacier and accost them without introduction, their usual form of salutation being, *Donnez-moi tout l'argent que vous avez?* The ideal way to treat a brigand is to arrest him, drag him to the nearest police station, and give him into custody. A more practical plan is to humour him by relieving his necessities, and afterwards to recoup yourself by holding him up to contumely in the press. But you must not expect him to be caught. The Department of Justice and Police will show great energy in sending you his *dossier* in several languages, so that you may be able to give chapter and verse when you denounce him in print. The Chief of the Department may even invite you to drink an absinthe with him in the Sion Casino. But, as for catching your brigand, that request is much too unreasonable to be seriously entertained.

* * * *

Frank Mathew tells the truth.

I can lay no claim to the honesty that has made the other members of this club so eager to expose their most awkward and ludicrous adventures. Why should I publish my least pleasant memories to strangers? That is a task I would leave to my enemies. Besides, whenever I have come to grief, some other fellow has been to blame. When I fell into Hampton Lock, before the eyes of a multitude, it was because that ungainly lout Jones let the boat swing. Jones laughed then, and many times after when he told the story; but why should I help him to spread it? But that is neither here nor there. If I had been always as lucky as the other members of this club, who seem to have remained dignified in their misfortunes, then I might be less reticent. And if I were so unscrupulous as to speak only of things less bitter to remember, then I might tell how on a Bavarian railway I was once waked at midnight by an excited official who—with an air as if life and death hung on my answers—plied me with questions in spite of my explaining to him that I did not even know what language he was talking, and who at last rushed away leaving me doubting whether he was a madman or a nightmare; or how I lost my way among the hills by

Bologna—at a time when I knew no Italian—and wandered for hours along dusty roads, cursing the ignorance of the natives; or how, dining at Lugano—in the open air and under a vine-covered trellis—I ordered a cheap wine, new to me, "Château-neuf-du-Pape," and was delighted when it was brought to me reverently cradled and in an immemorial bottle, and when it proved to be a wine of wonderful merit, and how my blood turned cold when the waiter gave me the bill, for he had mistaken my order, and I had been drinking Château-something-or-other, a priceless vintage.

* * * *

Alden is not sure which.

I am not sure what was my most awkward predicament, for the choice lies between a prayer-meeting and Folkestone. This may seem obscure, but it isn't, as you will presently see. My Folkestone experience was as follows:—The baby—I decline to specify whose baby, for the law of England does not compel any man to confess that he is a grandfather—had been ill for a week, and the physician said that we must take her to the seashore instantly. In half-an-hour we had caught a train for Folkestone, which the baby's mother, remembering her sensations when landing from the Boulogne boat after a rough passage, felt sure was "all that there is of the most seashore," as the French idiom has it. It was just about to rain when we reached Folkestone, and, putting the baby and her attendant slaves in a carriage, I told them to drive at once to the private hotel, which we had selected, and I would follow with the luggage. It took some time to pile a mountain of boxes and bundles on the top of the carriage, but, finally, just as the rain began to pour, a self-sacrificing friend who had remained to help got into the cab with me, and we told the driver to go to number 33, such-a-street. It was at the furthest extremity of the town, and when we reached there, after two or three attempts on the part of the top-heavy cab to upset, I was greeted by the information that no such person as the landlady of whom I was in search lived there. What was worse, nobody had ever heard of her, and no cab containing a baby had called at the house that day. Where then was the baby, and its mother, and my wife, and its other slaves? Obviously, they were lost somewhere in the town of Folkestone, and our two cabs might drive up and down for months without ever once meeting one another. I looked at my companion, and he looked at me in silence. No language could do justice to the occasion, and we both recognised the fact. I told the cabman to go to all the hotels in the neighbourhood,

and enquire for a missing baby. He explained that there were nothing but hotels and boarding-houses in Folkestone, and that to visit them all would take the greater part of our lives; still, he would try. So we went to at least a dozen different places, and, although twice a sample of the resident babies was brought out for our inspection, we did not find the one for which we were in search. Then the driver, seeing our despair, said that perhaps he had better drive to the pier, and we said that perhaps he had. I think he had a vague idea that we were lunatics, and could possibly be lured on board the Boulogne boat, and so got rid of. But he thought better of it before reaching the pier, and suggested that if we went back to the station, perhaps the stationmaster might help us. So we went back to the station, merely to be told by the stationmaster that he knew nothing about the missing landlady or the missing baby, and didn't want to, either. Once more the driver suggested the pier, and we told him to drive us anywhere. It was now after dark, and being wet and hungry, as well as devoid of wives and babies, we were beginning to be reckless. All at once, a joyful cry sounded from a passing cab. It was the voice of my wife, who was patrolling Folkestone in the hope of meeting us. Our nightmare was over, and in a few more minutes we were clasped in the arms of the baby—or, at any rate, we would have been had she been old enough to learn the use of her arms. To the unmarried man the experience may not seem quite so dreadful as it did to me, but let a married man mislay a valuable baby, not to speak of a wife and daughter, in a strange town on a stormy night, and he will know how near he can come to having a nightmare without preliminary pork and sleep.

* * * *

And tells of a prayer meeting.

Once, when I was an undergraduate, a prayer-meeting was held in somebody's room, which I attended. I do not recollect what was the occasion of the holding of this meeting, but I do remember that it was a particularly solemn one. There were about thirty of us in the room, and the meeting had been in progress for about half-an-hour, when it suddenly occurred to me that were someone to burst into a laugh, the astonished expression of the others would be something worth seeing. Then I thought how painful would be the feelings of the man who laughed, and how he would be covered with shame and remorse. All at once an irresistible desire to laugh came upon me. There was nothing whatever to laugh at, and the mere idea of laughing in such a

place filled me with horror, but still the desire—a purely nervous one, of course—to break out in a peal of laughter grew stronger and stronger. I bit my lips, and tried to think of the most solemn and depressing subjects, but that laugh could not be conjured in any such way; presently I knew that I was smiling—a broad, complacent, luxurious smile. Just then, a man sitting opposite to me saw my smile, and a look of cold horror spread over his face. At this I laughed aloud, in a choking, timorous way, but loudly enough to attract the attention of every one in the room. The mischief was now done, and, in the estimation of my comrades, I was disgraced for ever, as the man ought to be who insults pious people at their prayers. Being ruined, I thought that there was no longer any necessity for prolonging that terrible effort to suppress a laugh, and so I leaned back in my chair and laughed loud, long, and, in fact, uproariously. The meeting came to a sudden pause. The first expression on every face was that of amazed horror, but my laugh was contagious, and presently someone else joined in, and before order was restored the room rang with the laughter of a dozen men. All this time I was in an agony of self-reproach in spite of my laughter. I virtually broke up the meeting, and it was not until the clergyman, who presided, had dismissed us, that I could command myself sufficiently to try to explain to him the purely involuntary nature of my laughter. He was kind enough and intelligent enough to understand the matter, but the greater part of those who heard me believe to this day that I was a bold blasphemer of a peculiarly brutal character. I could never begin to tell what mental suffering the affair caused me, but I can safely say that I was never more miserable than I was at the very moment when I was laughing the most thorough and ecstatic laugh that ever came to me.

* * * *

Zangwill refuseth to be drawn, and runneth amuck.

I never was in an awkward predicament. I have seen it stated that I once wrote "To be concluded in our next" without having the slightest idea how to extricate my characters from the mess I had got them into, but that is another story. There is not a word of truth in it. An awkward predicament is as unfamiliar to me as a crinoline; I have never been in one. It is absurd, therefore, to ask me what is the *most* awkward predicament I have ever been in; besides, it is always so invidious to select. I really must refuse to pander to editorial flippancy, and to add myself to the

April fools who will scribble seriously upon the subject. I think, if this sort of thing is to take the place of our sensible symposia, it is time the Idlers' Club was abolished. The intrusion of ladies has spoilt everything. Once we sat with our feet on the mantelpiece smoking. (My own cigar was always given me by the artist.) Now we never smoke—Angelina won't permit it. Tea replaces the whiskey of yore, and the horizon is bounded by thin bread and butter. We are expected to stick to one predetermined subject—doubtless for fear we might wander off into the improper—and we are almost encouraged to bring our sewing. No more we enjoy those delightful excursions to everywhere—interrupting one another *apropos des bottes*, and capping an appreciation of Wagner with an anecdote about a mad turtle. Yet this is the only natural style of conversation. Who ever keeps to the point in real life? It is bad enough in examinations for the examiners to ask you about Henry II. when you are anxious to tell them about Elizabeth; or to demand your ideas on the manufacture of hydrochloric acid when the subject nearest your heart is the composition of ammonia. But conversation will not bear such inquisitorial pinning down to a particular point. It becomes a dead specimen butterfly instead of a living, fluttering creature. I think someone ought to tell the editors that they are simply ruining the club. I shudder to think what will become of it in five years' time, when nobody will belong to it but ladies and parsons. I would resign at once if it were not for sheer generosity. The generosity of the editors is, indeed, beyond all cavil. But even their generosity has its limits. It is as certain as quarter-day that if I do not fill my allotted space I shall not get paid. And yet, in the absence of any experience of the requisite nature, it is quite impossible for me to say one word on the subject I have been asked to talk about. I don't wish to tell a lie or to throw away money, but it looks as if I must do one or the other. Really, it's the most awkward predicament I was ever in.

" THE SIMPLE QUESTION I'VE GOT TO ASK YE IS *this*—DID YOU SIGNAL TO ANYBODY FROM THE COACH WHEN WE PASSED GALLOPER'S ?"

THE IDLER.

An Ingenue of the Sierras.

By Bret Harte.

Illustrations by A. S. Boyd.

I.

WE all held our breath as the coach rushed through the semi-darkness of Galloper's Ridge. The vehicle itself was only a huge lumbering shadow; its side-lights were carefully extinguished, and Yuba Bill had just politely removed from the lips of an outside passenger even the cigar with which he had been ostentatiously exhibiting his coolness. For it had been rumoured that the Ramon Martinez gang of "road agents" were "laying" for us on the second grade, and would time the passage of our lights across Galloper's in order to intercept us in the "brush" beyond. If we could cross the ridge without being seen, and so get through the brush before they reached it, we were safe. If they followed, it would only be a stern chase with the odds in our favour.

The huge vehicle swayed from side to side, rolled, dipped, and plunged, but Bill kept the track, as if, in the whispered words of the Expressman, he could "feel and smell" the road he could no longer see. We knew that at times we hung perilously over the edge of slopes that eventually dropped a thousand feet sheer to the tops of the sugar-pines below, but we knew that Bill knew it also. The half visible heads of the horses, drawn wedge-wise together by the tightened reins, appeared to cleave the darkness like a ploughshare, held between his rigid hands. Even the hoof-beats of the six horses had fallen into a vague, monotonous, distant roll. Then the ridge was crossed, and we plunged into the still blacker obscurity of the brush. Rather we no longer seemed to move —it was only the phantom night that rushed by us. The horses might have been submerged in some swift Lethean stream; nothing but the top of the coach and the rigid bulk of Yuba Bill arose above them. Yet even in that awful moment our speed was unslackened; it was as if Bill cared no longer to *guide* but only to drive, or as if the direction of his huge machine was determined by other hands than his. An incautious whisperer hazarded the paralysing suggestion of our "meeting another team." To our

great astonishment Bill overheard it; to our greater astonishment he replied. "It 'ud be only a neck and neck race which would get to h—ll first," he said quietly. But we were relieved—for he had *spoken!* Almost simultaneously the wider turnpike began to glimmer faintly as a visible track before us; the wayside trees fell out of line, opened up and dropped off one after another; we were on the broader tableland, out of danger, and apparently unperceived and unpursued.

Nevertheless in the conversation that broke out again with the relighting of the lamps and the comments, congratulations and reminiscences that were freely exchanged, Yuba Bill preserved a dissatisfied and even resentful silence. The most generous praise of his skill and courage awoke no response. "I reckon the old man waz just spilin' for a fight, and is feelin' disappointed," said a passenger. But those who knew that Bill had the true fighter's scorn for any purely purposeless conflict were more or less concerned and watchful of him. He would drive steadily for four or five minutes with thoughtfully knitted brows, but eyes still keenly observant under his slouched hat, and then, relaxing his strained attitude, would give way to a movement of impatience. "You aint uneasy about anything, Bill, are you?" asked the Expressman confidentially. Bill lifted his eyes with a slightly contemptuous surprise. "Not about anything ter *come*. It's what *hez* happened that I don't exackly sabe. I don't see no signs of Ramon's gang ever havin' been out at all, and ef they were out I don't see why they didn't go for us."

"STRUCK A MATCH AND HELD IT FOR HER."

"The simple fact is that our *ruse* was successful," said an outside passenger. "They waited to see our lights on the ridge,

and, not seeing them, missed us until we had passed. That's my opinion."

"You aint puttin' any price on that opinion, air ye?" enquired Bill, politely.

"No."

"'Cos thar's a comic paper in 'Frisco pays for them things, and I've seen worse things in it."

"Come off! Bill," retorted the passenger, slightly nettled by the tittering of his companions. "Then what did you put out the lights for?"

"Well," returned Bill, grimly, "it mout have been because I didn't keer to hev you chaps blazin' away at the first bush you *thought* you saw move in your skeer, and bringin' down their fire on us."

The explanation, though unsatisfactory, was by no means an improbable one, and we thought it better to accept it with a laugh. Bill, however, resumed his abstracted manner.

"Who got in at the Summit?" he at last asked abruptly of the Expressman.

"Derrick and Simpson of Cold Spring, and one of the 'Excelsior' boys," responded the Expressman.

"And that Pike County girl from Dow's Flat, with her bundles. Don't forget her," added the outside passenger, ironically.

"Does anybody here know her?" continued Bill, ignoring the irony.

"Yould better ask Judge Thompson; he was mighty attentive to her; gettin' her a seat by the off window, and lookin' after her bundles and things."

"Gettin' her a seat by the *window?*" repeated Bill.

"Yes, she wanted to see everything, and wasn't afraid of the shooting."

"Yes," broke in a third passenger, "and he was so d——d civil that when she dropped her ring in the straw, he struck a match agin all your rules, you know, and held it for her to find it. And it was just as we were crossin' through the brush, too. I saw the hull thing through the window, for I was hanging over the wheels with my gun ready for action. And it wasn't no fault of Judge Thompson's if his d——d foolishness hadn't shown us up, and got us a shot from the gang."

Bill gave a short grunt—but drove steadily on without further comment or even turning his eyes to the speaker.

We were now not more than a mile from the station at the cross roads where we were to change horses. The lights already glimmered in the distance, and there was a faint suggestion of the coming dawn on the summits of the ridge to the West. We had plunged into a belt of timber, when suddenly a horseman emerged at a sharp canter from a trail that seemed to be parallel with our own. We were all slightly startled; Yuba Bill alone preserving his moody calm.

"Hullo!" he said.

The stranger wheeled to our side as Bill slackened his speed. He seemed to be a "packer" or freight muleteer.

"Ye didn't get 'held up' on the Divide?" continued Bill, cheerfully.

"No," returned the packer, with a laugh; "*I* don't carry treasure. But I see you're all right, too. I saw you crossin' over Galloper's."

"*Saw* us?" said Bill, sharply. "We had our lights out."

"Yes, but there was suthin' white—a handkerchief or woman's veil, I reckon—hangin' from the window. It was only a movin' spot agin the hillside, but ez I was lookin' out for ye I knew it was you by that. Good night!"

He cantered away. We tried to look at each other's faces, and at Bill's expression in the darkness, but he neither spoke nor stirred until he threw down the reins when we stopped before the station. The passengers quickly descended from the roof; the Expressman was about to follow, but Bill plucked his sleeve.

"I'm goin' to take a look over this yer stage and these yer passengers with ye, afore we start."

"Why, what's up?"

"Well," said Bill, slowly disengaging himself from one of his enormous gloves, "when we waltzed down into the brush up there I saw a man, ez plain ez I see you, rise up from it. I thought our time had come and the band was goin' to play, when he sorter drew back, made a sign, and we just scooted past him."

"Well?"

"Well," said Bill, "it means that this yer coach was *passed through free* to-night."

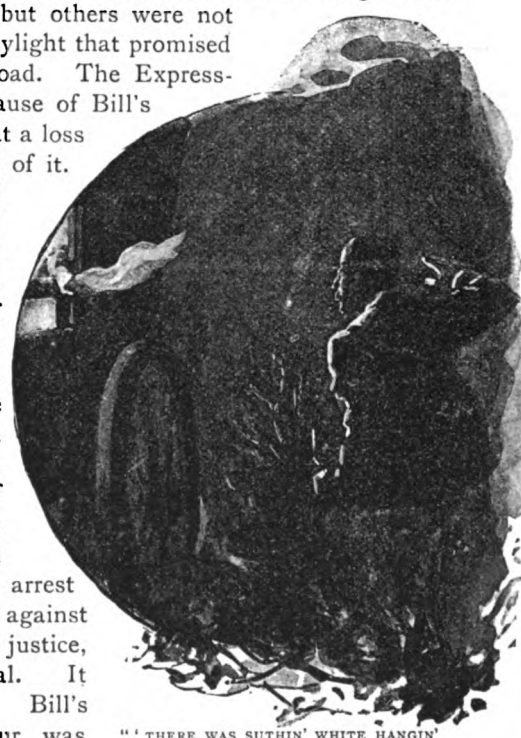
"You don't object to *that*—surely? I think we were deucedly lucky."

Bill slowly drew off his other glove. "I've been riskin' my everlastin' life on this d——d line three times a week," he said with mock humility, "and I'm allus thankful for small mercies.

But, he added grimly, "when it comes down to being passed free by some pal of a hoss thief and thet called a speshal Providence, *I aint in it!* No, sir, I aint in it!"

II.

It was with mixed emotions that the passengers heard that a delay of fifteen minutes to tighten certain screw-bolts had been ordered by the autocratic Bill. Some were anxious to get their breakfast at Sugar Pine, but others were not averse to linger for the daylight that promised greater safety on the road. The Expressman, knowing the real cause of Bill's delay, was nevertheless at a loss to understand the object of it. The passengers were all well known; any idea of complicity with the road agents was wild and impossible, and, even if there was a confederate of the gang among them, he would have been more likely to precipitate a robbery than to check it. Again, the discovery of such a confederate—to whom they clearly owed their safety—and his arrest would have been quite against the Californian sense of justice, if not actually illegal. It seemed evident that Bill's Quixotic sense of honour was leading him astray.



"'THERE WAS SUTHIN' WHITE HANGIN' FROM THE WINDOW.'"

The station consisted of a stable, a waggon shed, and a building containing three rooms. The first was fitted up with "bunks" or sleeping berths for the *employés*, the second was the kitchen, and the third and larger apartment was dining-room or sitting-room, and was used as general waiting-room for the passengers. It was not a refreshment station, and there was no "bar." But a mysterious command from the omnipotent Bill produced a demi-

john of whiskey, with which he hospitably treated the company. The seductive influence of the liquor loosened the tongue of the gallant Judge Thompson. He admitted to having struck a match to enable the fair Pike Countian to find her ring, which, however, proved to have fallen in her lap. She was "a fine, healthy young woman—a type of the Far West, sir; in fact, quite a prairie blossom! yet simple and guileless as a child." She was on her way to Marysville, he believed, "although she expected to meet friends—a friend—in fact, later on." It was her first visit to a large town—in fact, any civilised centre—since she crossed the plains three years ago. Her girlish curiosity was quite touching, and her innocence irresistible. In fact, in a country whose tendency was to produce "frivolity and forwardness in young girls, he found her a most interesting young person." She was even then out in the stable-yard watching the horses being harnessed, "preferring to indulge a pardonable healthy young curiosity than to listen to the empty compliments of the younger passengers."

"SHE WAS WATCHING THE REPLACING OF LUGGAGE IN THE BOOT."

The figure which Bill saw thus engaged, without being otherwise distinguished, certainly seemed to justify the Judge's opinion. She appeared to be a well-matured country girl, whose frank grey eyes and large laughing mouth expressed a wholesome and abiding gratification in her life and surroundings. She was watching the replacing of luggage in the boot. A little feminine start, as one of her own parcels was thrown somewhat roughly on the roof, gave Bill his opportunity. "Now there," he growled to the helper, "ye aint carting stone! Look out, will yer! Some of your things, miss?" he added, with gruff courtesy, turning to her. "These yer trunks, for instance?"

She smiled a pleasant assent, and Bill, pushing aside the

helper, seized a large square trunk in his arms. But from excess of zeal, or some other mischance, his foot slipped, and he came down heavily, striking the corner of the trunk on the ground and loosening its hinges and fastenings. It was a cheap, common-looking affair, but the accident discovered in its yawning lid a quantity of white, lace-edged feminine apparel of an apparently superior quality. The young lady uttered another cry and came quickly forward, but Bill was profuse in his apologies, himself girded the broken box with a strap, and declared his intention of having the company "make it good" to her with a new one. Then he casually accompanied her to the door of the waiting-room, entered, made a place for her before the fire by simply lifting the nearest and most youthful passenger by the coat-collar from the stool that he was occupying, and, having installed the lady in it, displaced another man who was standing before the chimney, and, drawing himself up to his full six feet of height in front of her, glanced down upon his fair passenger as he took his waybill from his pocket.

"Your name is down here as Miss Mullins?" he said.

She looked up, became suddenly aware that she and her questioner were the centre of interest to the whole circle of passengers, and, with a slight rise of colour, returned "Yes."

"Well, Miss Mullins, I've got a question or two to ask ye. I ask it straight out afore this crowd. It's in my rights to take ye aside and ask it—but that aint my style; I'm no detective. I needn't ask it at all, but act as ef I knowed the answer, or I might leave it to be asked by others. Ye needn't answer it ef ye don't like; ye've got a friend over ther—Judge Thompson—who is a friend to ye, right or wrong, jest as any other man here is—as though ye'd packed your own jury. Well, the simple question I've got to ask ye is *this*—Did you signal to anybody from the coach when we passed Galloper's an hour ago?"

We all thought that Bill's courage and audacity had reached its climax here. To openly and publicly accuse a "lady" before a group of chivalrous Californians, and that lady possessing the further attractions of youth, good looks and innocence, was little short of desperation. There was an evident movement of adhesion towards the fair stranger, a slight muttering broke out on the right, but the very boldness of the act held them in stupefied surprise. Judge Thompson, with a bland propitiatory smile, began: "Really, Bill, I must protest on behalf of this young lady——" when the fair accused, raising her eyes to her accuser,

to the consternation of everybody answered with the slight but convincing hesitation of conscientious truthfulness:

"*I did.*"

"Ahem!" interposed the Judge, hastily, "er—that is—er—you allowed your handkerchief to flutter from the window. I noticed it myself, casually—one might say even playfully—but without any particular significance."

The girl, regarding her apologist with a singular mingling of pride and impatience, returned briefly:

"I signalled."

"Who did you signal to?" asked Bill, gravely.

"The young gentleman I'm going to marry."

A start, followed by a slight titter from the younger passengers, was instantly suppressed by a savage glance from Bill.

"What did you signal to him for?" he continued.

"To tell him I was here, and that it was all right," returned the young girl, with a steadily rising pride and colour.

"Wot was all right?" demanded Bill.

"That I wasn't followed, and that he could meet me on the road beyond Cass's Ridge Station." She hesitated a moment, and then, with a still greater pride, in which a youthful defiance was still mingled, said: "I've run away from home to marry him. And I mean to! No one can stop me. Dad didn't like him just because he was poor, and dad's got money. Dad wanted me to marry a man I hate, and got a lot of dresses and things to bribe me."

"And you're taking them in your trunk to the other feller?" said Bill, grimly.

"Yes, he's poor," returned the girl, defiantly.

"Then your father's name is Mullins?" asked Bill.

"It's not Mullins. I—I—took that name," she hesitated, with her first exhibition of self-consciousness.

"Wot *is* his name?"

"Eli Hemmings."

A smile of relief and significance went round the circle. The fame of Eli or "Skinner" Hemmings, as a notorious miser and usurer, had passed even beyond Galloper's Ridge.

"The step that you're taking, Miss Mullins, I need not tell you, is one of great gravity," said Judge Thompson, with a certain paternal seriousness of manner, in which, however, we were glad to detect a glaring affectation, "and I trust that you and your affianced have fully weighed it. Far be it from me to

interfere with or question the natural affections of two young people, but may I ask you what you know of the—er—young gentleman for whom you are sacrificing so much, and, perhaps, imperilling your whole future? For instance, have you known him long?"

The slightly troubled air of trying to understand—not unlike the vague wonderment of childhood—with which Miss Mullins had received the beginning of this exordium, changed to a relieved smile of comprehension as she said quickly, "Oh, yes, nearly a whole year."

"And," said the Judge, smiling, "has he a vocation—is he in business?"

"Oh, yes," she returned, "he's a collector."

"A collector?"

"Yes; he collects bills, you know, money," she went on, with childish eagerness, "not for himself—*he* never has any money, poor Charley—but for his firm. It's dreadful hard work, too, keeps him out for days and nights, over bad roads and baddest weather. Sometimes, when he's stole over to the ranch just to see me, he's been so bad he could scarcely keep his seat in the saddle, much less stand. And he's got to take mighty big risks, too. Times the folks are cross with him and won't pay; once they shot him in the arm, and he came to me, and I helped do it up for him. But he don't mind. He's real brave, jest as brave as he's good." There was such a wholesome ring of truth in this pretty praise that we were touched in sympathy with the speaker.

"What firm does he collect for?" asked the Judge, gently.

"I don't know exactly—he won't tell me—but I think it's a Spanish firm. You see"—she took us all into her confidence with a sweeping smile of innocent yet half-mischievous artfulness—"I only know because I peeped over a letter he once got from his firm, telling him he must hustle up and be ready for the road the next day—but I think the name was Martinez—yes, Ramon Martinez."

In the dead silence that ensued—a silence so profound that we could hear the horses in the distant stable-yard rattling their harness—one of the younger "Excelsior" boys burst into a hysteric laugh, but the fierce eye of Yuba Bill was down upon him, and seemed to instantly stiffen him into a silent, grinning mask. The young girl, however, took no note of it; following

out, with lover-like diffusiveness, the reminiscences thus awakened, she went on:

"Yes, it's mighty hard work, but he says it's all for me, and as soon as we're married he'll quit it. He might have quit it before, but he won't take no money of me, nor what I told him I could get out of dad! That aint his style. He's mighty proud —if he is poor—is Charley. Why thar's all ma's money which she left me in the Savin's Bank that I wanted to draw out—for I had the right—and give it to him, but he wouldn't hear of it! Why, he wouldn't take one of the things I've got with me, if he knew it. And so he goes on ridin' and ridin', here and there and everywhere, and gettin' more and more played out and sad, and thin and pale as a spirit, and always so uneasy about his business, and startin' up at times when we're meetin' out in the South Woods or in the far clearin', and sayin': 'I must be goin' now, Polly,' and yet always tryin' to be chiffle and chipper afore me. Why he must have rid miles and miles to have watched for me thar in the brush at the foot of Galloper's to-night, jest to see if all was safe, and Lordy! I'd have given him the signal and showed a light if I'd died for it the next minit. There! That's what I know of Charley—that's what I'm running away from home for—that's what I'm running to him for, and I don't care who knows it! And I only wish I'd done it afore—and I would—if—if—if—he'd only *asked me!* There now!" She stopped, panted, and choked. Then one of the sudden transitions of youthful emotion overtook the eager, laughing face; it clouded up with the swift change of childhood, a lightning quiver of expression broke over it—and—then came the rain!

"AND—THEN CAME THE RAIN!"

I think this simple act completed our utter demoralisation! We smiled feebly at each other with that assumption of masculine superiority which is miserably conscious of its own helplessness at such moments. We looked out of the window, blew our noses, said: "Eh—what?" and "I say," vaguely to each other, and

were greatly relieved and yet apparently astonished when Yuba Bill, who had turned his back upon the fair speaker, and was kicking the logs in the fireplace, suddenly swept down upon us and bundled us all into the road, leaving Miss Mullins alone. Then he walked aside with Judge Thompson for a few moments; returned to us, autocratically demanded of the party a complete reticence towards Miss Mullins on the subject matter under discussion, re-entered the station, re-appeared with the young lady, suppressed a faint idiotic cheer which broke from us at the spectacle of her innocent face once more cleared and rosy, climbed the box, and in another moment we were under way.

"Then she don't know what her lover is yet?" asked the Expressman, eagerly.

"No."

"Are *you* certain it's one of the gang?"

"Can't say *for sure*. It mout be a young chap from Yolo who bucked agin the tiger* at Sacramento, got regularly cleaned out and busted, and joined the gang for a flier. They say thar was a new hand in that job over at Keeley's—and a mighty game one, too—and ez there was some buckshot onloaded that trip, he might hev got his share, and that would tally with what the girl said about his arm. See! Ef that's the man, I've heered he was the son of some big preacher in the States, and a college sharp to boot, who ran wild in 'Frisco, and played himself for all he was worth. They're the wust kind to kick when they once get a foot over the traces. For stiddy, comf'ble kempany," added Bill reflectively, "give *me* the son of a man that was *hanged!*"

"But what are you going to do about this?"

"That depends upon the feller who comes to meet her."

"But you aint going to try to take him? That would be playing it pretty low down on them both."

"Keep your hair on, Jimmy! The Judge and me are only going to rastle with the sperrit of that gay young galoot, when he drops down for his girl—and exhort him pow'ful! Ef he allows he's convicted of sin and will find the Lord, we'll marry him and the gal offhand at the next station, and the Judge will officiate himself for nothin'. We're goin' to have this yer elopement done on the square—and our waybill clean—you bet!"

"But you don't suppose he'll trust himself in your hands?"

"Polly will signal to him that it's all square."

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* *i.e.*, Gambled at Faro.

"Ah!" said the Expressman. Nevertheless in those few moments the men seemed to have exchanged dispositions. The Expressman looked doubtfully, critically, and even cynically before him. Bill's face had relaxed, and something like a bland smile beamed across it, as he drove confidently and unhesitatingly forward.

Day, meantime, although full blown and radiant on the mountain summits around us, was yet nebulous and uncertain in the valleys into which we were plunging. Lights still glimmered in the cabins and few ranch buildings which began to indicate the thicker settlements. And the shadows were heaviest in a little copse, where a note from Judge Thompson in the coach was handed up to Yuba Bill, who at once slowly began to draw up his horses. The coach stopped finally near the junction of a small cross road. At the same moment Miss Mullins slipped down from the vehicle, and, with a parting wave of her hand to the Judge who had assisted her from the steps, tripped down the cross road, and disappeared in its semi-obscurity. To our surprise the stage waited, Bill holding the reins listlessly in his hands. Five minutes passed—an eternity of expectation, and—as there was that in Yuba Bill's face which forbade idle questioning—an aching void of silence also! This was at last broken by a strange voice from the road:

"A PARTING WAVE OF HER HAND.'

"Go on—we'll follow."

The coach started forward. Presently we heard the sound of other wheels behind us. We all craned our necks backward to get a view of the unknown, but by the growing light we could only see that we were followed at a distance by a buggy with two figures in it. Evidently Polly Mullins and her lover! We hoped that they would pass us. But the vehicle, although drawn by a fast horse, preserved its distance always, and it was plain that its driver had no desire to satisfy our curiosity. The Expressman had recourse to Bill.

"Is it the man you thought of?" he asked, eagerly.

"I reckon," said Bill, briefly.

"But," continued the Expressman, returning to his former scepticism, "what's to keep them both from levanting together now?"

Bill jerked his hand towards the boot with a grim smile.

"Their baggage."

"Oh!" said the Expressman.

"Yes," continued Bill. "We'll hang on to that gal's little frills and fixin's until this yer job's settled, and the ceremony's over, jest as ef we waz her own father. And, what's more, young man," he added, suddenly turning to the Expressman, "*you'll* express them trunks of hers *through to Sacramento* with your kempany's labels, and hand her the receipts and cheques for them, so she *can get 'em there.* That'll keep *him* outer temptation and the reach o' the gang, until they get away among white men and civilisation again. When your hoary-headed ole grandfather—or, to speak plainer, that partikler old whiskey-soaker known as Yuba Bill, wot sits on this box," he continued, with a diabolical wink at the Expressman—"waltzes in to pervide for a young couple jest startin' in life, thar's nothin' mean about his style, you bet. He fills the bill every time! Speshul Providences take a back seat when he's around."

When the station hotel and straggling settlement of Sugar Pine, now distinct and clear in the growing light, at last rose within rifleshot on the plateau, the buggy suddenly darted swiftly by us—so swiftly that the faces of the two occupants were barely distinguishable as they passed—and, keeping the lead by a dozen lengths, reached the door of the hotel. The young girl and her companion leaped down and vanished within as we drew up. They had evidently determined to elude our curiosity, and were successful.

But the material appetites of the passengers, sharpened by the keen mountain air, were more potent than their curiosity, and, as the breakfast-bell rang out at the moment the stage stopped, a majority of them rushed into the dining-room and scrambled for places without giving much heed to the vanished couple or to the Judge and Yuba Bill, who had disappeared also. The through coach to Marysville and Sacramento was likewise waiting, for Sugar Pine was the limit of Bill's ministration, and the coach which we had just left went no further. In the course of twenty minutes, however, there was a slight and somewhat ceremonious bustling in the hall and on the verandah, and Yuba Bill and the

Judge re-appeared. The latter was leading, with some elaboration of manner and detail, the shapely figure of Miss Mullins, and Yuba Bill was accompanying her companion to the buggy. We all rushed to the windows to get a good view of the mysterious stranger and probable ex-brigand whose life was now linked with our fair fellow-passenger. I am afraid, however, that we all participated in a certain impression of disappointment and doubt. Handsome and even cultivated-looking, he assuredly was—young and vigorous in appearance. But there was a certain half-shamed, half-defiant suggestion in his expression, yet coupled with a watchful lurking uneasiness which was not pleasant and hardly becoming in a bridegroom—and the possessor of such a bride. But the frank, joyous, innocent face of Polly Mullins, resplendent with a simple, happy confidence, melted our hearts again, and condoned the fellow's shortcomings. We waved our hands; I think we would have given three rousing cheers as they drove away if the omnipotent eye of Yuba Bill had not been upon us. It was well, for the next moment we were summoned to the presence of that soft-hearted autocrat.

We found him alone with the Judge in a private sitting-room, standing before a table on which there was a decanter and glasses. As we filed expectantly into the room and the door closed behind us, he cast a glance of hesitating tolerance over the group.

"Gentlemen," he said slowly, "you was all present at the beginnin' of a little game this mornin', and the Judge thar thinks that you oughter be let in at the finish. *I* don't see that it's any of *your* d—d business—so to speak—but ez the Judge here allows you're all in the secret, I've called you in to take a partin' drink to the health of Mr. and Mrs. Charley Byng—ez is now comf'ably off on their bridal tower. What *you* know or what *you* suspects of the young galoot that's married the gal aint worth shucks to anybody, and I wouldn't give it to a yaller pup to play with, but the Judge thinks you ought all to promise right here that you'll keep it dark. That's his opinion. Ez far as my opinion goes, gen'lmen," continued Bill, with greater blandness and apparent cordiality, "I wanter simply remark, in a keerless, offhand gin'ral way, that ef I ketch any God-forsaken, lop-eared, chuckle-headed blatherin' idjet airin' *his* opinion —— "

"One moment, Bill," interposed Judge Thompson with a grave smile—"let me explain. You understand, gentlemen," he said, turning to us, "the singular, and I may say affecting, situation

which our good-hearted friend here has done so much to bring to what we hope will be a happy termination. I want to give here, as my professional opinion, that there is nothing in his request which, in your capacity as good citizens and law-abiding men, you may not grant. I want to tell you, also, that you are condoning no offence against the statutes; that there is not a particle of legal evidence before us of the criminal antecedents of Mr. Charles Byng, except that which has been told you by the innocent lips of his betrothed, which the law of the land has now sealed for ever in the mouth of his wife, and that our own actual experience of his acts have been in the main exculpatory of any previous irregu-

THE JUDGE AND MISS MULLINS.

larity—if not incompatible with it. Briefly, no judge would charge, no jury convict, on such evidence. When I add that the young girl is of legal age, that there is no evidence of any previous undue influence, but rather of the reverse, on the part of the bridegroom, and that I was content, as a magistrate, to perform the ceremony, I think you will be satisfied to give your promise, for the sake of the bride, and drink a happy life to them both."

I need not say that we did this cheerfully, and even extorted from Bill a grunt of satisfaction. The majority of the company, however, who were going with the through coach to Sacramento,

then took their leave, and, as we accompanied them to the verandah, we could see that Miss Polly Mullins's trunks were already transferred to the other vehicle under the protecting seals and labels of the all-potent Express Company. Then the whip cracked, the coach rolled away, and the last traces of the adventurous young couple disappeared in the hanging red dust of its wheels.

But Yuba Bill's grim satisfaction at the happy issue of the episode seemed to suffer no abatement. He even exceeded his usual deliberately regulated potations, and, standing comfortably with his back to the centre of the now deserted bar-room, was more than usually loquacious with the Expressman. "You see," he said, in bland reminiscence, "when your old Uncle Bill takes hold of a job like this, he puts it straight through without changin' hosses. Yet thar was a moment, young feller, when I thought I was stompt! It was when we'd made up our mind to make that chap tell the gal fust all what he was! Ef she'd rared or kicked in the traces, or hung back only ez much ez that, we'd hev given him jest five minits' law to get up and get and leave her, and we'd hev toted that gal and her fixin's back to her dad again! But she jest gave a little scream and start, and then went off inter hysterics, right on his buzzum, laughing and cryin' and sayin' that nothin' should part 'em. Gosh! if I didn't think *he* woz more cut up than she about it—a minit it looked as ef *he* didn't allow to marry her arter all, but that passed, and they was married hard and fast—you bet! I reckon he's had enough of stayin' out o' nights to last him, and ef the valley settlements hevn't got hold of a very shining member, at least the foothills hev got shut of one more of the Ramon Martinez gang."

"What's that about the Ramon Martinez gang?" said a quiet potential voice.

Bill turned quickly. It was the voice of the Divisional Superintendent of the Express Company—a man of eccentric determination of character, and one of the few whom the autocratic Bill recognised as an equal—who had just entered the bar-room. His dusty pongee cloak and soft hat indicated that he had that morning arrived on a round of inspection.

"Don't care if I do, Bill," he continued, in response to Bill's invitatory gesture, walking to the bar. "It's a little raw out on the road. Well, what were you saying about Ramon Martinez gang? You haven't come across one of 'em, have you?"

"No," said Bill, with a slight blinking of his eye, as he ostentatiously lifted his glass to the light.

"And you *won't*," added the Superintendent, leisurely sipping his liquor. "For the fact is, the gang is about played out. Not from want of a job now and then, but from the difficulty of disposing of the results of their work. Since the new instructions to the agents to identify and trace all dust and bullion offered to them went into force, you see, they can't get rid of their swag. All the gang are spotted at the offices, and it costs too much for them to pay a fence or a middleman of any standing. Why, all that flaky river gold they took from the Excelsior Company can be identified as easy as if it was stamped with the company's mark. They can't melt it down themselves; they can't get others to do it for them; they can't ship it to the Mint or Assay Offices in Marysville and 'Frisco, for they won't take it without our certificate and seals, and *we* don't take any undeclared freight *within* the lines that we've drawn around their beat, except from people and agents known. Why, *you* know that well enough, Jim," he said, suddenly appealing to the Expressman, "don't you?"

Possibly the suddenness of the appeal caused the Expressman to swallow his liquor the wrong way, for he was overtaken with a fit of coughing, and stammered hastily as he laid down his glass, "Yes—of course—certainly."

"No, sir," resumed the Superintendent cheerfully, "they're pretty well played out. And the best proof of it is that they've lately been robbing ordinary passengers' trunks. There was a freight waggon 'held up' near Dow's Flat the other day, and a lot of baggage gone through. I had to go down there to look into it. Darned if they hadn't lifted a lot o' woman's wedding things from that rich couple who got married the other day out at Marysville. Looks as if they were playing it rather low down, don't it? Coming down to hard pan and the bed rock—eh?"

The Expressman's face was turned anxiously towards Bill, who, after a hurried gulp of his remaining liquor, still stood staring at the window. Then he slowly drew on one of his large gloves. "Ye didn't," he said, with a slow, drawling, but perfectly distinct, articulation, "happen to know old 'Skinner' Hemmings when you were over there?"

"Yes."

"And his daughter?"

"He hasn't got any."

"A sort o' mild, innocent, guileless child of nature?" persisted Bill, with a yellow face, a deadly calm and Satanic deliberation.

"No. I tell you he *hasn't* any daughter. Old man Hemmings is a confirmed old bachelor. He's too mean to support more than one."

"And you didn't happen to know any o' that gang, did ye?" continued Bill, with infinite protraction.

"Yes. Knew 'em all. There was French Pete, Cherokee Bob, Kanaka Joe, One-eyed Stillson, Softy Brown, Spanish Jack, and two or three Greasers."

"And ye didn't know a man by the name of Charley Byng?'

"'YE DIDN'T KNOW A MAN BY THE NAME OF CHARLEY BYNG?'"

"No," returned the Superintendent, with a slight suggestion of weariness and a distraught glance towards the door.

"A dark, stylish chap, with shifty black eyes and a curled up merstache?" continued Bill, with dry, colourless persistence.

"No. Look here, Bill, I'm in a little bit of a hurry—but I suppose you must have your little joke before we part. Now, what *is* your little game?"

"Wot you mean?" demanded Bill, with sudden brusqueness.

"Mean? Well, old man, you know as well as I do. You're

giving me the very description of Ramon Martinez himself, ha! ha! No—Bill! you didn't play me this time. You're mighty spry and clever, but you didn't catch on just then."

He nodded and moved away with a light laugh. Bill turned a stony face to the Expressman. Suddenly a gleam of mirth came into his gloomy eyes. He bent over the young man, and said in a hoarse, chuckling whisper:

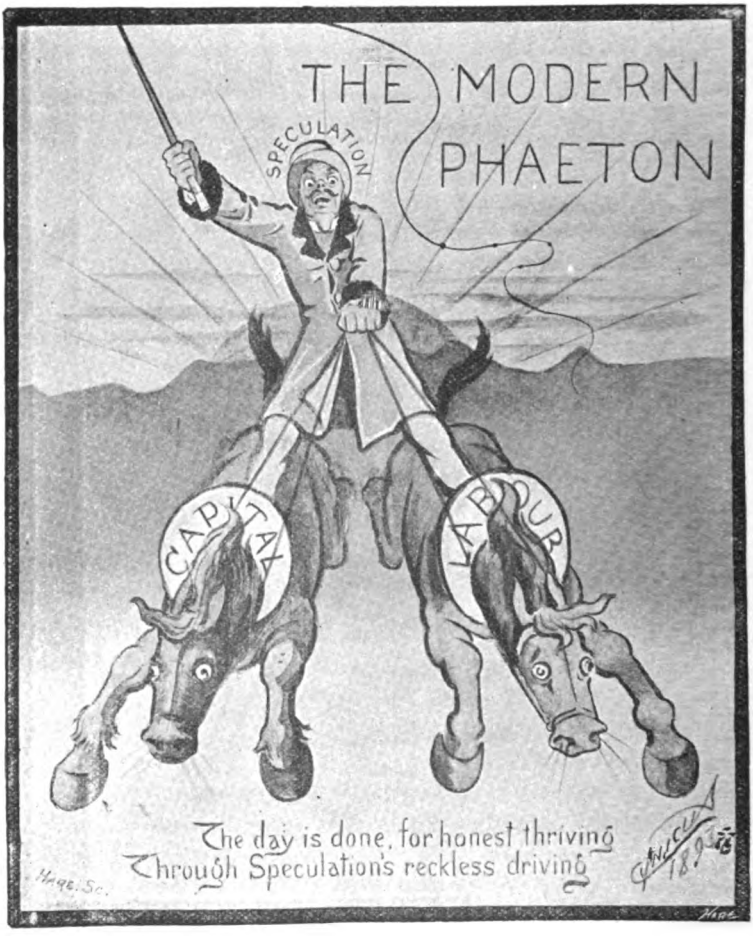
"But I got even after all!"

"How?"

"He's tied up to that lying little she-devil, hard and fast!"

The Modern Babylon.

By Cynicus.



THE SCAPEGOAT
Cynicus
1895

LAW & JUSTICE
Your distance Madam, for you see
You dare not, unless I agree
1803

STATE
CHURCH
LABOUR
SAMSON AGONISTES

MR. ROBERT BUCHANAN.

My First Books.

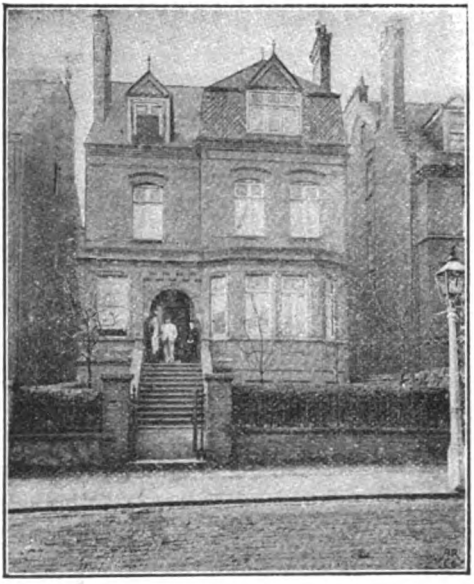
"UNDERTONES" AND "IDYLS AND LEGENDS OF INVERBURN."

By Robert Buchanan.

Illustrations by George Hutchinson.

(Photographs by Messrs. Fradelle and Young.)

MY first serious effort in Literature was what I may call a double-barrelled one; in other words, I was seriously engaged upon Two Books at the same time, and it was by the merest accident that they did not appear simultaneously. As it was, only a few months divided one from the other, and they are always, in my own mind, inseparable, or Siamese, twins. The book of poems called *Undertones* was the one; the book of poems called *Idyls and Legends of Inverburn* was the other. They were published nearly thirty years ago, when I was still a boy, and as they happened to bring me into connection, more or less intimately, with some of the leading spirits of the age, a few notes concerning them may be of interest.



MR. BUCHANAN'S HOUSE.

A word, first, as to my literary beginnings. I can scarcely remember the time when the idea of winning fame as an author had not occurred to me, and so I determined very early to adopt the literary profession, a determination which I unfortunately carried out, to my own life-long discomfort, and the annoyance of a large portion of the reading public. When a boy in Glasgow, I

made the acquaintance of David Gray, who was fired with a similar ambition to fly incontinently to London—

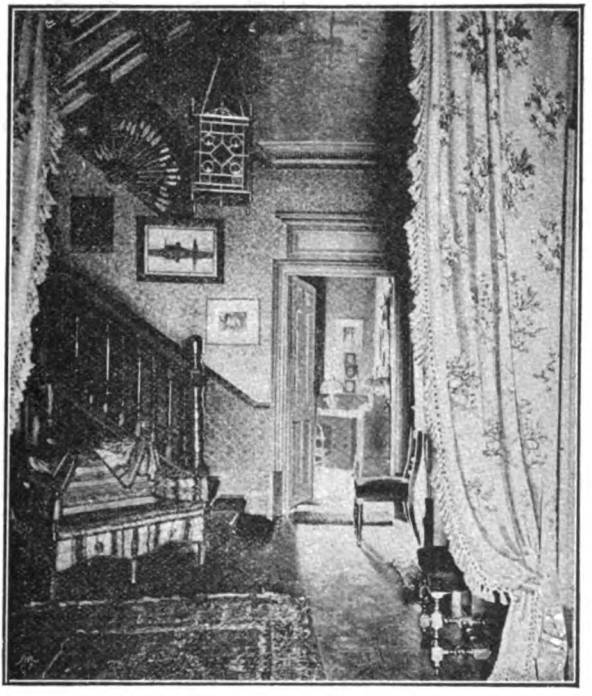
> The terrible City whose neglect is Death,
> Whose smile is Fame!

and to take it by storm. It seemed so easy! "Westminster Abbey," wrote my friend to a correspondent; "if I live, I shall be buried there—so help me God!" "I mean, after Tennyson's death," I myself wrote to Philip Hamerton, "to be Poet-laureate!" From these samples of our callow speech, the modesty of our ambition may be inferred. Well, it all happened just as we planned, only otherwise! Through some blunder of arrangement we two started for London on the same day, but from different railway stations, and, until some weeks afterwards, one knew nothing of the other's exodus. I arrived at King's Cross Railway Station with the conventional half-crown in my pocket; literally and absolutely, half-a-crown; I wandered about the Great City till I was weary, fell in with a Thief and Good Samaritan who sheltered me, starved and struggled with abundant happiness, and finally found myself located at 66, Stamford Street, Waterloo Bridge, in a top room, for which I paid, when I had the money, seven shillings a week. Here I lived royally, with Duke Humphrey, for many a day; and hither, one sad morning, I brought my poor friend Gray, whom I had discovered languishing somewhere in the Borough, and who was already death-struck through "sleeping out" one night in Hyde Park.* "Westminster Abbey—if I live, I shall be buried there!" Poor country singing-bird, the great Dismal Cage of the Dead was not for *him*, thank God! He lies under the open Heaven, close to the little river which he immortalised in song. After a brief sojourn in the "dear old ghastly bankrupt garret at No. 66," he fluttered home to die.

To that old garret, in these days, came living men of letters who were of large and important interest to us poor cheepers from the North: Richard Monckton Milnes, Laurence Oliphant, Sydney Dobell, among others, who took a kindly interest in my dying comrade. But afterwards, when I was left to fight the battle alone, the place was solitary. Ever reserved and independent, not to say "dour" and opinionated, I made no friends, and cared for none. I had found a little work on the newspapers and magazines, just enough to keep body and soul alive, and while occupied with this I was busy on the literary Twins to which I referred at the opening of this paper. What did my isolation

* See the writer's *Life of David Gray*.

matter, when I had all the gods of Greece for company, to say nothing of the fays and trolls of Scottish Fairyland? Pallas and Aphrodite haunted that old garret; out on Waterloo Bridge, night after night, I saw Selene and all her nymphs; and when my heart sank low, the Fairies of Scotland sang me lullabies! It was a happy time. Sometimes, for a fortnight together, I never had a dinner—save, perhaps, on Sunday, when a good-natured Hebe would bring me covertly a slice from the landlord's joint.



THE ENTRANCE HALL.

My favourite place of refreshment was the Caledonian Coffee House in Covent Garden. Here, for a few coppers, I could feast on coffee and muffins—muffins saturated with butter, and worthy of the gods! Then, issuing forth, full-fed, glowing, oleaginous, I would light my pipe, and wander out into the lighted streets.

Criticisms for the *Athenæum*, then edited by Hepworth Dixon, brought me ten-and-sixpence a column. I used to go to the old office in Wellington Street and have my contributions measured off on the

current number with a foot-rule, by good old John Francis, the publisher. I wrote, too, for the *Literary Gazette*, where the pay was less princely—seven-and-sixpence a column, I think, but with all extracts deducted! The *Gazette* was then edited by John Morley, who came to the office daily with a big dog. "I well remember the time when you, a boy, came to me, a boy, in Catherine Street," wrote honest John to me years afterwards. But the neighbourhood of Covent Garden had greater wonders! Two or three times a week, walking, black bag in hand, from Charing Cross Station to the office of *All the Year Round* in Wellington Street, came the good, the only Dickens! From that good Genie the poor straggler from Fairyland got solid help and sympathy. Few can realise now what Dickens was then to London. His humour filled its literature like broad sunlight; the Gospel of Plum-pudding warmed every poor devil in Bohemia.

At this time, I was (save the mark!) terribly in earnest, with a dogged determination to bow down to no graven literary Idol, but to judge men of all ranks on their personal merits. I never had much reverence for Gods of any sort; if the Superior Persons could not win me by love, I remained heretical. So it was a long time before I came close to any living souls, and all that time I was working away at my poems. Then, a little later, I used to go o' Sundays to the open house of Westland Marston, which was then a great haunt of literary Bohemians. Here I first met Dinah Muloch, the author of *John Halifax*, who took a great fancy to me, used to carry me off to her little nest on Hampstead Heath, and lend me all her books. At Hampstead, too, I foregathered with Sydney Dobell, a strangely beautiful soul, with (what seemed to me then) very effeminate manners. Dobell's mouth was ever full of very pretty Latinity, for the most part Virgilian. He was fond of quoting, as an example of perfect expression, sound conveying absolute sense of the thing described, the doggrel lines—

> "Down the stairs the young missises ran
> To have a look at Miss Kate's young man!"

The sibilants in the first line, he thought, admirably suggested the idea of the young ladies slipping along the banisters and peeping into the hall!

But I had other friends, more helpful to me in preparing my first twin-offering to the Muses: the faces under the gas, the painted women on the Bridge (how many a night have I walked up and down by their sides, and talked to them for hours together), the actors in the theatres, the ragged groups at the stage doors.

London to me, then, was still Fairyland! Even in the Haymarket, with its babbles of Nymph and Satyr, there was wonderful life from midnight to dawn—deep sympathy with which told me that I was a born Pagan, and could never be really comfortable in any modern Temple of the Proprieties. On other points connected with that old life on the borders of Bohemia, I need not touch; it has all been so well done already by Murger, in the *Vie de Bohème*, and it will not bear translation into contemporary English. There were cakes and ale, pipes and beer, and ginger was hot in the mouth too! *Et ego fui in Bohemiâ!* There were inky fellows and bouncing girls, *then; now* there are only fine ladies, and respectable, God-fearing men of letters.

THE DINING ROOM.

It was while the Twins were fashioning, that I went down in summer time to live at Chertsey on the Thames, chiefly in order to be near to one I had long admired, Thomas Love Peacock, the friend of Shelley and the author of *Headling Hall*—"Greekey Peekey," as they called him, on account of his prodigious knowledge of things and books Hellenic. I soon grew to love the dear old man, and sat at his feet, like an obedient pupil, in his green old-fashioned garden at Lower Halliford. To him I first read some of my *Undertones*, getting many a rap over the knuckles for my

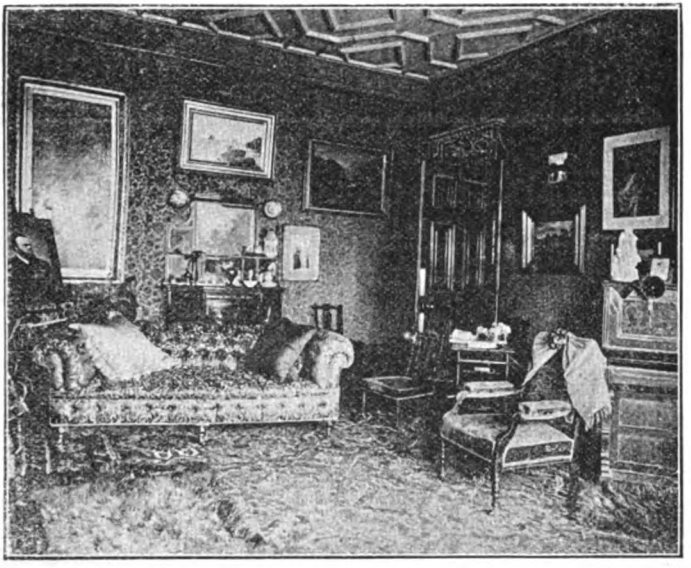
sacrilegious tampering with Divine Myths. What mercy could *I* expect from one who had never forgiven "Johnny" Keats for his frightful perversion of the sacred mystery of Endymion and Selene? and who was horrified at the base "modernism" of Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound?" But to think of it! He had known Shelley, and all the rest of the demigods, and his speech was golden with memories of them all! Dear old Pagan, wonderful in his death as in his life. When, shortly before he died, his house caught fire, and the mild curate of the parish begged him to withdraw from the library of books he loved so well, he flatly refused to listen, and cried roundly, in a line of vehement blank verse, "By the immortal gods, I will not stir!"*

Under such auspices, and with all the ardour of youth to help, my Book, or Books, progressed. Meantime, I was breaking out into poetry in the magazines, and writing "criticism" by the yard. At last the time came when I remembered another friend with whom I had corresponded, and whose advice I thought I might now ask with some confidence. This was George Henry Lewes, to whom, when I was a boy in Glasgow, I had sent a bundle of manuscript, with the blunt question, "Am I, or am I not, a Poet?" To my delight he had replied to me with a qualified affirmative, saying that in the productions he had "discerned a real faculty, and *perhaps* a future poet. I say perhaps," he added, "because I do not know your age, and because there are so many poetical blossoms which never come to fruit." He had, furthermore, advised me "to write as much as I felt impelled to write, but to publish nothing"—at any rate, for a couple of years. Three years had passed, and I had neither published anything—that is to say, in book form—nor had I had any further communication with my kind correspondent. To Lewes, then, I wrote, reminding him of our correspondence, telling him that I *had* waited, not two years, but three, and that I now felt inclined to face the public. I soon received an answer, the result of which was that I went, on Lewes's invitation, to the Priory, North Bank, Regent's Park, and met my friend and his partner, better known as "George Eliot."

But, as the novelists say, I am anticipating. Sick to death, David Gray had returned to the cottage of his father, the hand-loom weaver, at Kirkintilloch, and there had peacefully passed away, leaving as his legacy to the world the volume of beautiful

*I have given a detailed account of Peacock in my "Look Round Literature."

poems published under the auspices of Lord Houghton. I knew of his death the hour he died; awaking in my bed, I was certain of my loss, and spoke of it (long before the formal news reached me) to a temporary companion. This by the way; but what is more to the purpose is that my first grief for a beloved comrade



THE DRAWING ROOM.

had expressed itself in the words which were to form the "proem" of my first book—

Poet gentle hearted,
Are you then departed,
And have you ceased to dream the dream we loved of old so well?
Has the deeply-cherish'd
Aspiration perished,
And are you happy, David, in that heaven where you dwell?
Have you found the secret
We, so wildly, sought for,
And is your soul enswath'd at last in the singing robes you fought for?

Full of my dead friend, I spoke of him to Lewes and George Eliot, telling them the piteous story of his life and death. Both were deeply touched, and Lewes cried, "Tell that story to the public"; which I did, immediately afterwards, in the *Cornhill Magazine*. By this time I had my Twins ready, and had discovered a publisher for one of them, *Undertones*. The other, *Idyls and Legends of*

Inverburn, was a ruggeder bantling, containing almost the first *blank verse* poems ever written in Scottish dialect. I selected one of the poems, "Willie Baird," and showed it to Lewes. He expressed himself delighted, and asked for more. I then showed him the "Two Babes." "Better and better!" he wrote; "publish a volume of such poems and your position is assured." More than this, he at once found me a publisher, Mr. George Smith, of Messrs. Smith and Elder, who offered me a good round sum (such it seemed to me then) for the copyright. Eventually, however, after "Willie Baird" had been published in the *Cornhill*, I withdrew the manuscript from Messrs. Smith and Elder, and transferred it to Mr. Alexander Strahan, who offered me both more liberal terms and more enthusiastic appreciation.

It was just after the appearance of my story of David Gray in the *Cornhill* that I first met, at the Priory, North Bank, with Robert Browning. It was an odd and representative gathering of men, only one lady being present, the hostess, George Eliot. I was never much of a hero-worshipper, but I had long been a sympathetic Browningite, and I well remember George Eliot taking me aside after my first *tête-à-tête* with the poet, and saying, "Well, what do you think of him? Does he come up to your ideal?" He *didn t* quite, I must confess, but I afterwards learned to know him well and to understand him better. He was delighted with my statement that one of Gray's wild ideas was to rush over to Florence and "throw himself on the sympathy of Robert Browning."

Phantoms of these first books of mine, how they begin to rise around me! Faces of friends and counsellors that have flown for ever; the sibylline Marian Evans with her long, weird, dreamy face; Lewes, with his big brow and keen thoughtful eyes; Browning, pale and spruce, his eye like a skipper's cocked-up at the weather; Peacock, with his round, mellifluous speech of the old Greeks; David Gray, great-eyed and beautiful, like Shelley's ghost; Lord Houghton, with his warm worldly smile and easy-fitting enthusiasm. Where are they all now? Where are the roses of last summer, the snows of yester year? I passed by the Priory to-day, and it looked like a great lonely Tomb. In those days, the house where I live now was not built; all up here Hampstead-ways was grass and fields. It was over these fields that Herbert Spencer and George Eliot used to walk on their way to Hampstead Heath. The Sibyl has gone, but the great Philosopher still remains, to brighten the sunshine. It was not my luck to

know him *then*—would it had been!—but he is my friend and neighbour in these latter days, and, thanks to him, I still get glimpses of the manners of the old gods.

With the publication of my two first books, I was fairly launched, I may say, on the stormy waters of literature. When the *Athenæum* told its readers that "this was *poetry*, and of a noble kind," and when Lewes vowed in the *Fortnightly Review* that even if I "never wrote another line, my place among the pastoral

THE STUDY.

poets would be undisputed," I suppose I felt happy enough—far more happy than any praise could make me now. Poor little pigmy in a cockle-boat, I thought Creation was ringing with my name! I think I must have seemed rather conceited and "bounceable," for I have a vivid remembrance of a *Fortnightly* dinner at the Star and Garter, Richmond, when Anthony Trollope, angry with me for expressing a doubt about the poetical greatness of Horace, wanted to fling a decanter at my head! It was about this time that an omniscient publisher, after an interview with me, exclaimed (the circumstance is historical), "I don't like that young man; he talked to me as if he was God Almighty, or *Lord Byron!*" But in sober truth, I never had the sort of conceit with which men credited

me; I merely lacked gullibility, and saw, at the first glance, the whole unmistakable humbug and insincerity of the Literary Life. I think still that, as a rule, the profession of letters narrows the sympathy and warps the intelligence. When I saw the importance which a great man or woman could attach to a piece of perfunctory criticism, when I saw the care with which this Eminent Person "humoured his reputation," and the anxiety with which that Eminent Person concealed his true character, I found my young illusions very rapidly fading. On one occasion, when George Eliot was very much pestered by an unknown lady, an insignificant individual, who had thrust herself somewhat pertinaciously upon her, she turned to me and asked, with a smile, for my opinion? I gave it, rudely enough, to the effect that it was good for "distinguished people" to be reminded occasionally of how very small consequence they really were, in the mighty life of the World!

From that time until the present I have pursued the vocation into which fatal Fortune, during boyhood, incontinently thrust me, and have subsisted, ill sometimes, well sometimes, by a busy pen. I may, therefore, with a certain experience, if with little authority, imitate those who have preceded me in giving reminiscences of their first literary beginnings, and offer a few words of advice to my younger brethren—to those persons, I mean, who are entering the profession of Literature. To begin with, I entirely agree with Mr. Grant Allen in his recent avowal that Literature is the poorest and least satisfactory of all professions; I will go even further, and affirm that it is one of the least ennobling. With a fairly extensive knowledge of the writers of my own period, I can honestly say that I have scarcely met one individual who has not deteriorated morally by the pursuit of literary Fame. For complete literary success among contemporaries, it is imperative that a man should either have no real opinions, or be able to conceal such as he possesses, that he should have one eye on the market and the other on the public journals, that he should humbug himself into the delusion that book-writing is the highest work in the Universe, and that he should regulate his likes and dislikes by one law, that of expediency. If his nature is in arms against anything that is rotten in Society or in Literature itself, he must be silent. Above all, he must lay this solemn truth to heart, that when the World speaks well of him the World will demand the *price* of praise, and that price will possibly be his living Soul. He may tinker, he may trim, he may succeed, he may be buried in Westminster Abbey, he may hear before he dies all the people

saying, "How good and great he is! how perfect is his art! how gloriously he embodies the Tendencies of his Time!"* but he will know all the same that the price has been paid, and that his living

MR. ROBERT BUCHANAN AND HIS FAVOURITE DOG.

Soul has gone, to furnish that whitewashed Sepulchre, a Blameless Reputation.

* O those "Tendencies of one's Time"! O those dismal Phantoms, conjured up by the blatant Book-taster and the Indolent Reviewer! How many a poor Soul, that would faln have been honest, have they bewildered into the Slough of Despond and the Bog of Beautiful Ideas!—R. B.

For one other thing, also, the Neophyte in Literature had better be prepared. He will never be able to subsist by creative writing unless it so happens that the form of expression he chooses is popular in form (fiction, for example), and even in that case, the work he does, if he is to live by it, must be in harmony with the social and artistic *status quo*. Revolt of any kind is always disagreeable. Three-fourths of the success of Lord Tennyson (to take an example) was due to the fact that this fine poet regarded Life and all its phenomena from the standpoint of the English public school, that he ethically and artistically embodied the sentiments of our excellent middle-class education. His great American contemporary, Whitman, in some respects the most commanding spirit of this generation, gained only a few disciples, and was entirely misunderstood and neglected by contemporary criticism. Another prosperous writer, to whom I have already alluded, George Eliot, enjoyed enormous popularity in her lifetime, while the most strenuous and passionate novelist of her period, Charles Reade, was entirely distanced by her in the immediate race for Fame. In Literature, as in all things, manners and costume are most important; the hall-mark of contemporary success is perfect Respectability. It is not respectable to be too candid on any subject, religious, moral, or political. It is very respectable to say, or imply, that this country is the best of all possible countries, that War is a noble institution, that the Protestant Religion is grandly liberal, and that social evils are only diversified forms of social good. Above all, to be respectable, one must have "beautiful ideas." "Beautiful ideas" are the very best stock-in-trade a young writer can begin with. They are indispensable to every complete literary outfit. Without them, the short cut to Parnassus will never be discovered, even though one starts from Rugby.

Balder's Ball.

By P. Von Schönthan.

Illustrated by J. Gülich.

BALDER had begged me to give him a bed for the night. He was going to a ball that evening, and had business early the following morning in Berlin. He lived in such an out-of-the-way suburb that it would be quite impossible for him to go home to sleep. I was only too delighted to be of service to him. Although I could not offer him a bed, it would be easy to improvise a shakedown on which he could have a few hours' rest. I set to work at once, and did the best I could for him, using a bundle of rugs for the pillows, and my old dressing-gown for the mattress. When Balder saw it, he declared that nothing could be more to his taste.

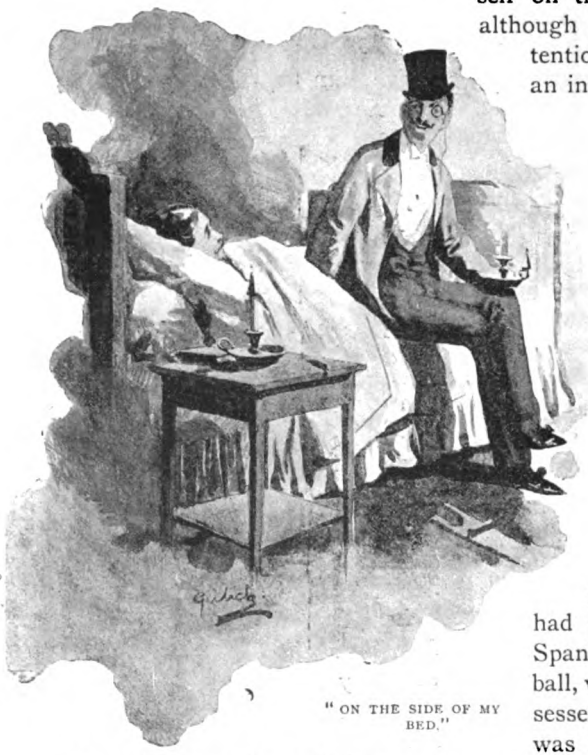
"WALKED INTO MY ROOM."

It was long past midnight, when I was awakened from a refreshing sleep by somebody fumbling with a key at the lock of my door. Several bungling attempts were made before the key was fitted into the lock successfully. At last, Balder walked into my room. He presented rather a comical appearance, with his crush-hat on one side of his head like the leaning tower of Pisa, and a short overcoat, with his long tail-coat peeping beneath. His face was flushed, partly with excitement, and he appeared possessed of a burning desire to relate his adventures to somebody. I had been looking at him with one eye; the other, nearest him, I kept tight shut, and did not move, for I had no desire to enter into conversation with him. But my friend was not so easily shaken in his purpose; he came close to my bedside, stepping on my boot-jack, so that it fell over with a terrible noise, and held the lighted candle within a few inches of my nose. It

was impossible for even the most shameless shammer of sleep to hold out any longer. I opened my eyes, and said in the sleepiest tone I could assume:

"Enjoyed yourself?"

"Famously, my dear fellow," answered Balder, seating himself on the side of my bed, although I forestalled his intention, and left hardly an inch for him to sit on. Then he entered into a long and not very lucid rigmarole on souls which are destined to come together. The story was rendered all the more difficult to understand from the fact that I kept falling asleep, and dreaming between his rhapsodies; but I gathered that Balder had met with a young Spanish lady at the mask ball, who apparently possessed the soul which he was fated to meet, and that she was the only person on earth who could make him happy. He had spent the whole evening with her, and she had promised to meet him at the next ball. At his request she had lifted her veil for one instant, revealing a face of Madonna-like beauty. It was a simple story, but when a man's brain is fired with love he lingers over it. The words grace, Southern colouring, eyes like a gazelle, etc., must have been repeated very often, for I dreamed later on that I was repeating them to myself.



"ON THE SIDE OF MY BED."

I bore it all patiently, for hospitality is a sacred duty, and, besides, the state which Balder's mind was in demanded and deserved consideration.

As he went on with his story, he raised his voice, perhaps to rouse my flagging attention. Suddenly, somebody coughed in the next room. It was not a natural cough, but an artificial one, evidently intended by my landlady to serve as a gentle reminder that at two o'clock in the morning all respectable people should be in bed and quiet. My room was only separated from the apartment in which my landlady and her daughter slept by a door, which was hidden on either side by a high wardrobe, through which, in spite of this precaution, voices could be heard very distinctly. I informed Balder of this fact, but, unfortunately, he utterly refused to take my advice and go quietly to bed. He said he could not sleep, and, unhappily, catching sight of my coffee-machine, he added that he would like some coffee.

"STARTED TO GET SOME WATER."

"Sleep if you can," he said; "I can manage it all for myself." He then removed his coat, dressed himself in the dressing-gown which acted as his mattress, and started to get some water from the kitchen, knocking things down on the way, and opening and shutting all the wrong doors. I became resigned, and made up my mind not to waste my breath on any fresh warnings. Somebody else coughed. It was Fräulein Lieschen this time, my landlady's daughter. At any other time, Balder himself would have shown more consideration.

Most extraordinary noises proceeded from the water-tap in the kitchen. At last the kitchen door banged, and Balder re-appeared again. I expressed my regret that I had no methylated spirit, but he said it did not matter, and catching hold of a bottle of my expensive brandy, poured a lot into the lamp. Then he sat gazing into the blue flame without blinking.

Crash! went the glass globe, and the boiling water poured all over the table and put out the fire. I sprang out of my bed. "Good gracious!" I exclaimed, "the whole thing will explode." He said

nothing, but began to pick up the hot pieces of glass patiently. The coughing in the next room became louder than ever.

"For heaven's sake!" I went on, "try to be quiet if you can. The people in the next room want to go to sleep. *Don't* you hear them coughing?"

"Well! I never heard of such impudence! That coughing has disturbed me for some time. Anybody would think you'd got into an almshouse for old women —— Where is the sugar?"

"IT GAVE WAY!"

"Up there, in the cigar-box. But don't knock that rapier down."

Balder climbed up on a cane chair. It gave way. Klirr! The rapier fell on the floor, and Balder with it.

"Confound you, do take care. Didn't I warn you?" An energetic knocking at the door of communication interrupted me.

"Herr Reif, I must really beg you to be quiet," called my landlady's daughter, not by any means in her sweetest tones. "We've been kept awake for the last hour."

"That's nothing to us," said Balder from the floor, where he was groping for the rapier that had rolled under the wardrobe.

"Do be quiet! That is my landlady's daughter, a very respectable girl——"

"Well, is nobody respectable except her? What do you pay rent for?" His face grew red with rage, and, placing his mouth close to the door he called out, "What do you want with Reif? He's in bed. I only wanted to reach down the sugar, and the old rapier fell on my head—a thing that might happen to anybody! Just lie down quietly and go to sleep. Such a fuss about nothing! Are we in a hospital?"

"Do be quiet, Balder!" I begged, and my pleading at least had the effect of silencing whatever else was on his tongue. He thought no more of the sugar, but sat at the table and drank his self-brewed coffee without it. When he had finished it he lighted a cigarette, at which he puffed away till the room was full of smoke. As I lay and looked at him, I fell into that peaceful state in which dreaming and reality are so much mixed that it is hard to distinguish between them. And then Balder disappeared in

clouds of smoke, and I heard and saw no more. I was awakened again by a light being held near my face. Balder was standing at my bedside with the candle in his hand. "Ah! I'm glad you've been asleep again!" he said, as I half-opened my eyes and looked at him. "I want to make a poem to my Spaniard. Have you got a rhyming dictionary anywhere about?"

"There, on the lowest shelf of the bookcase, but *do* be quiet."

He got the book without knocking anything down; refilled his coffee-cup, and leant back in his chair, and murmured—

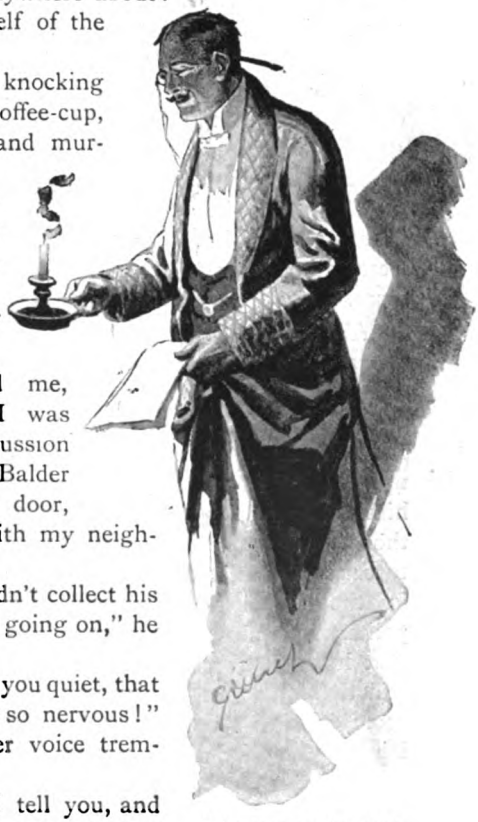
"Where shall I meet thee?
On the Guadelquiver?
"On the Sequara? On the
fair Zucar?
"Or any other far-off
Spanish river. . . . ."

Sleep again overpowered me, and I knew nothing till I was awakened by a noisy discussion taking place close to me. Balder stood with his face to the door, engaged in a hot dispute with my neighbours.

"The devil himself couldn't collect his thoughts with that coughing going on," he was saying as I woke up.

"I was coughing to make you quiet, that endless murmuring made me so nervous!" cried Fräulein Lieschen, her voice trembling with annoyance.

"I'm writing a poem, I tell you, and when one is composing a poem one must murmur. If you can't sleep through it, you can't be healthy. You must have eaten too much supper, or something. You can congratulate yourself that you've got such a lodger as Reif. Do you understand me? If you had me I'd teach you——"



"I'M GLAD YOU'VE BEEN ASLEEP."

Again and again, in as persuasive a voice as I could assume, I begged the orator at the wardrobe to put an end to the speech he was delivering on his views of a landlady's duties

towards her tenants. At length my patience gave way, and, sitting up in bed, I commanded him in a voice of authority to give, over his poetry and recitation, and to blow out the light and get into bed. Balder at length seemed to realise that he was trespassing on my hospitality, and that a certain amount of respect was due to my wishes as his host. He became silent; put his manuscript carefully into my dressing-gown pocket; cast one last fiery glance at the door, and retired to bed.

I do not know if he saw the daughter of sunny Spain, with her gazelle-like eyes in his dreams, but I do know that he snored as if he were dreaming of a saw-mill.

"IN A HOT DISPUTE."

About three hours later, the winter daylight struggled into the room. Balder got up and dressed himself as quietly as a mouse. He seemed as though he was trying to make up for the disturbance he had made in the night, or, rather, in the morning. He excused himself most politely for waking me up, but said that he felt that he could not leave without saying good-bye, and thanking me for my kind hospitality. Then he left the room, closing the door softly behind him. At the same moment, I heard the door of my landlady's room open. Half a minute's dead silence followed, and then Balder fell back into my room like one stunned.

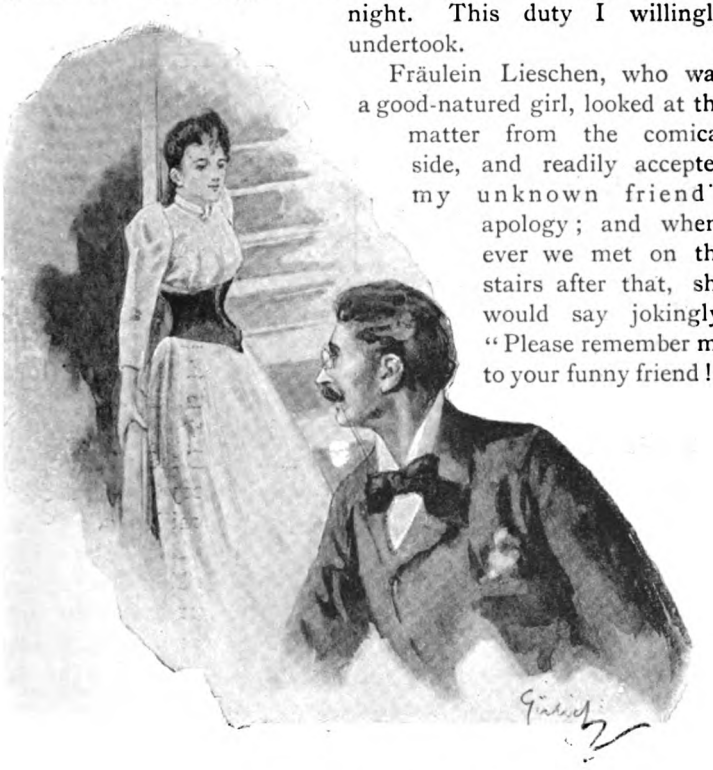
"Who is that girl that came out of the next room?" he asked breathlessly.

"Fräulein Lieschen, of course, the daughter of my landlady, to whom you were kind enough to deliver a lecture in the middle of the night——"

"She is my Spanish girl!" he gasped, grinding his teeth, and shaking his head disconsolately. He took a long time to recover himself. He sat down again on the side of my bed, as he had

done on his return from the ball. But in what a different mood! He made me swear to him that I would never reveal his name to Fräulein Lieschen, but that I would excuse him without giving any clue to his identity, for the disturbance he had caused in the night. This duty I willingly undertook.

Fräulein Lieschen, who was a good-natured girl, looked at the matter from the comical side, and readily accepted my unknown friend's apology; and whenever we met on the stairs after that, she would say jokingly, "Please remember me to your funny friend!"



"REMEMBER ME TO YOUR FUNNY FRIEND!"

"Lions in Their Dens."

V.—THE LORD LIEUTENANT AT DUBLIN CASTLE.

By Raymond Blathwayt.

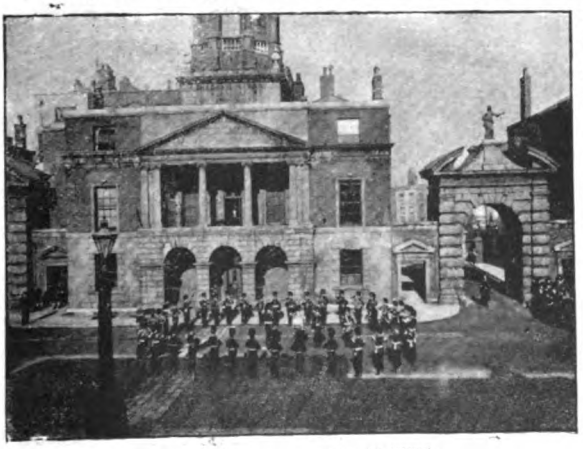
(Photographs and Illustrations by Lafayette, of Dublin, and Byrne, of Richmond.)

THE HON. MRS ARTHUR HENNIKER.

THE Lord Lieutenant's sister, Mrs. Arthur Henniker, who is helping him to do the honours of the Castle, and whom I had known in London, Mr. Fulke Greville, and I, were wandering round the curious old-fashioned buildings and court-yards that constitute the domain of Dublin Castle one bright breezy day in early spring. A military band was playing opposite the principal entrance, whilst the guard was being mounted in precisely the same manner as at the guard mounting at St. James's. The scene was brilliant and inspiriting in the extreme. As we passed through an archway we came somewhat suddenly upon the massive Round Tower, from the top of which floated the Union Jack, and which dates back to a period not later than that of King John. Close to the Round Tower, which bears so curious a resemblance to the still more magnificent tower of the same name at Windsor, is the Chapel Royal. Here we found the guardian, a quaint, and garrulous and most obliging old person, waiting to show us over the handsome, albeit somewhat gloomy, building. Very exact and particular was our *cicerone* in pointing out to us the old fourteenth century painted windows, the special pews reserved for His Excellency, and the ladies and gentlemen of the court; the coats of arms belonging to the various Governors of Ireland,

extending over a period of many hundreds of years—all these, I say, he carefully pointed out, drawing especial attention to one over which, at the moment, a thin ray of golden sunlight was falling, and which, he informed me, was the coat of arms of the Earl of Rochester—poor Rochester, the gay, the witty, the wicked, and the repentant. On quitting the chapel we began to ascend, under the auspices of another guide, a tremendously steep staircase, which is cut inside the fifteen-feet stone wall which leads to the chamber in the Round Tower wherein the Ulster King-at-Arms preserves the ancient records of the Castle. On our pilgrimage up this weary flight of stairs the guide drew our attention to a gloomy little dungeon, cut out of the thickness of the wall, in which there is but little light, and wherein the musty smell of ages is plainly discernible. "This," whispered Mr. Greville in my ear, "reminds me of Mark Twain's 'Innocents Abroad.'" After a glance at the record chamber, which was crammed with documents,

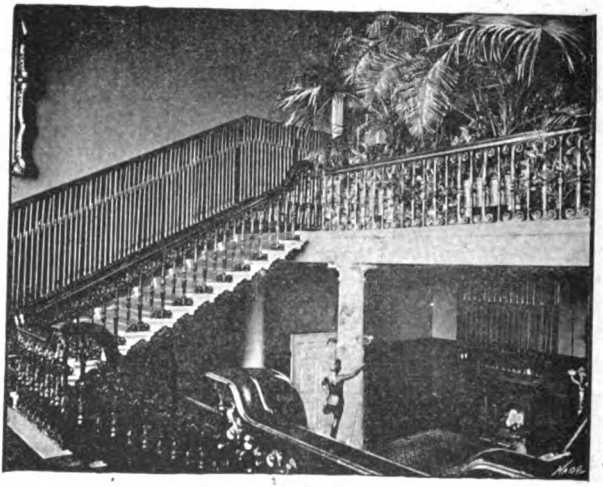
THE CASTLE.



CASTLE YARD. BAND PLAYING.

we passed, with a sense of relief, into the bright sunny air and the large courtyard, round which are built the handsome lofty stables in which the Castle horses—of which there are an immense number—are kept, and which stables, Colonel Forster, the Master of the Horse, told me, are upwards of two hundred years old.

"And now, Mr. Blathwayt," said Mrs. Henniker, as we passed the two sentries on guard at the entrance to the great hall, and proceeded up a staircase lined with rifles and through long sunlit corridors, "you must come with me to my own special sanctum, and rest yourself, after the object lessons in history which we have been giving you this morning." Here, in a lofty, white-panelled room, with long windows looking down upon the private gardens of the Castle in which His Excellency and Captain Streatfield, one of the A.D.C.'s, were walking up and down, Mrs. Henniker and I sat talking of the past almost more than we did of the actual present. For, though my hostess is quite a young woman, yet as a daughter of the celebrated Richard Monckton Milnes, the first Lord Houghton, she cannot fail to have the most delightful reminiscences of the many celebrities with whom her father was so fond of filling his house.



GRAND STAIRCASE, DUBLIN CASTLE.

"But," said she, "proud as I am of my father, I am quite as proud of my grandfather, Richard Pemberton Milnes, for he was only twenty-two years of age when he refused the choice of a seat in the Cabinet, either as Chancellor of the Exchequer or Secretary at War. My grandmother, Mrs. Pemberton Milnes, in her diary for 1809, says that one morning, while we were at breakfast, a king's messenger drove up in a post-chaise and four with a despatch from Mr. Perceval, offering my husband the choice of a

seat in the Cabinet. Mr. Milnes immediately said, 'Oh, no, I will not accept either; with my temperament I should be dead in a year.' And nothing could induce him to do so either," continued Mrs. Henniker, "nor could he be induced to accept the Peerage which was offered him by Lord Palmerston in 1856."

"But your father was not so rigid in his views as your grandfather, was he, Mrs. Henniker?" said I.

HIS EXCELLENCY LORD HOUGHTON IN HIS STUDY.

"No," she replied, "certainly he was not, although I don't think that he quitted the House of Commons, which he always loved, without a pang of real regret. Amongst the many kind congratulations he received—for no man ever had more friends—was a very pretty one from his old friend, Mrs. Proctor, in which she said:

"'He enters from the common air
Into that temple dim;
He learns among those ermined Peers
The diplomatic hymn.
His Peers? Alas! when will they learn
To grow up Peers to him?'"

"You must have met many interesting people at your father's house?" I observed, during the course of our conversation.

"Why, yes," replied she, with an amused smile, "don't you know the ridiculous story that Mr. Wemyss Reid, in his charming biography of my father, tells, and which, indeed, I believe was first told by Sir Henry Taylor, in his autobiography? I will tell it you. You know my father was acquainted with everybody, and his greatest pleasure in life was to introduce the notoriety of the moment to the leading members of English Society. On the particular occasion on which this story was told, it is alleged that somebody asked whether a certain murderer—it was Courvoisier,

THE HON. MRS. HENNIKER IN HER BOUDOIR.

I think, the valet who killed his master—had been hanged that morning, and my aunt immediately answered, 'I hope so, or Richard will have him to his breakfast party next Thursday.' But this story, Mr. Blathwayt, is really absolutely without foundation. I have here," continued Mrs. Henniker, "a very interesting book of autographs, which I have kept for as far back as I can remember, and in which everybody who came to our house had to write their names," and as she spoke she placed in my hands a large volume, on every page of which was a photograph and an autograph. There was Lecky, the historian; and Trench, the late

Archbishop of Dublin; Sir Richard Burton, the traveller; and Owen Meredith, the poet. There was a portrait of Swinburne when quite a young man, together with his autograph. "I have known Mr. Swinburne all my life," remarked Mrs. Henniker. "I used to play croquet with him when I was quite a little girl, and laugh at him because he used to get in such a passion when I won the game." There was John Bright's signature, there was that of Philippe d'Orléans and General Chanzy, and last, but not least, there was that of Charles Dickens.

THE DRAWING ROOM, DUBLIN CASTLE.

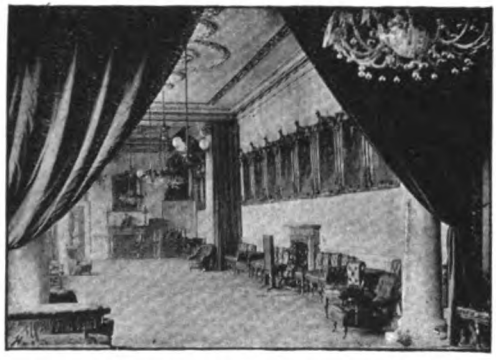
"My father," explained Mrs. Henniker, "was a very old friend of Dickens, and, curiously enough, his grandmother was a housekeeper at Crewe Hall, where my mother was born, and I have often heard her say that the greatest treat that could be given her and her brother and sister was an afternoon in the housekeeper's room at Crewe, for Mrs. Dickens was a splendid story-teller, and used to love to gather the children round her and tell them fairy stories. And so it was only natural that my mother should feel a special interest in Charles Dickens, when she came to know him

in after life. I believe that the very last time that he ever dined out was at my father's house, when a dinner was specially arranged to enable the Prince of Wales and the King of the Belgians to make his acquaintance. Even at that time, poor man, he was suffering so much from rheumatic gout that he had to remain in the dining room until the guests had assembled, so that he was introduced to the Prince at the dinner table. I might mention that Dean Stanley wrote to my father, asking him to be one of those who should place before him the proposal that Charles Dickens should be buried in the Abbey."

THRONE ROOM, DUBLIN CASTLE.

Amongst the many interesting letters and papers that Mrs. Henniker showed me was one from Mr. Gladstone to herself congratulating her on her first novel "Sir George," for Mrs. Henniker, notwithstanding the rather unfortunate fact that she has many social duties to attend to, which must necessarily hinder her in what would otherwise be a brilliant literary career, is a remarkably fine writer of a certain class of fiction, and notably of what may be termed the Society novel. But almost better than her novels, of which she has produced some two or three within the last few years, are her short stories, of which she published one, a singularly able study of lower middle-class life, in an early number of the "Speaker," and which many of the readers of that journal will remember under the title of a "Bank Holiday." With reference to

"Sir George," Mr. Gladstone, who is a very old friend of her family, wrote: "My dear Mrs. Henniker,—It is, I admit, with fear and trembling that I commonly open a novel which is presented to me." He then goes on to speak in strong terms of eulogy of the book which she had sent to him. The letter was not without a special interest as giving one a glimpse into the mind of the G.O.M. on what must be one of the most arduous duties of his hardworking life. Referring to the publication of her most recent novel, "Foiled," which is a depiction of Society life as it actually is, and not, as is so frequently the case, of the writer's imagination as to what Society is or should be, I asked Mrs. Henniker if she wrote her stories from life.



THE PICTURE GALLERY.

"Well," she replied, "of course there is a general idea in my stories which is taken from the life I see around me, but, as a rule, I draw from my own imagination. I am a very quick writer, and I wrote 'Sir George' in one summer holiday. Mr. T. P. O'Connor wanted me to write a novel to start the new edition of his Sunday paper with, but, unfortunately, I had none ready. I find myself that, for character sketching, next to studying people from life, the best thing is to carefully go through the writings of such people as Alfred de Musset, whose little *caprices* are so delicate. I think that the best Society novelists at present, who write with a real knowledge of the people they are describing, are W. E. Norris, Julian Sturgis, and Rhoda Broughton." We continued in conversation for some time longer, until the time came for afternoon tea, when Mrs. Henniker suggested that we should join the rest of the party in the drawing room.

Here we found a number of the A.D.C.'s engaged in merry conversation; most of them are quite young men, immensely popular in the Dublin Society and on the hunting field, where even in that great sporting country they are usually to be found well in the first flight. We sat talking for a few minutes, when the door suddenly opened, and a tall, singularly handsome, well-

groomed young man, in morning dress, entered the room. Upon his appearance, Mrs. Henniker and her sister, Lady Fitzgerald, and the remaining ladies and gentlemen present, rose to their feet, for this was His Excellency the Viceroy of Ireland. It will interest my American readers to learn that, not only do Mrs. Henniker and Lady Fitzgerald always rise upon their brother's entrance into the room, but it is further their custom, as it is the bounden duty of every lady, to curtsey to him profoundly on leaving the luncheon or dinner table. His Excellency at once joined in our conversation. We were discussing parodies at the moment, and somebody had stated—indeed I think it was myself—that a certain parody which had been quoted, and over which we had been laughing very heartily, was by the well-known Cambridge lyrist, C. C. Calverley.

LADY FITZGERALD.

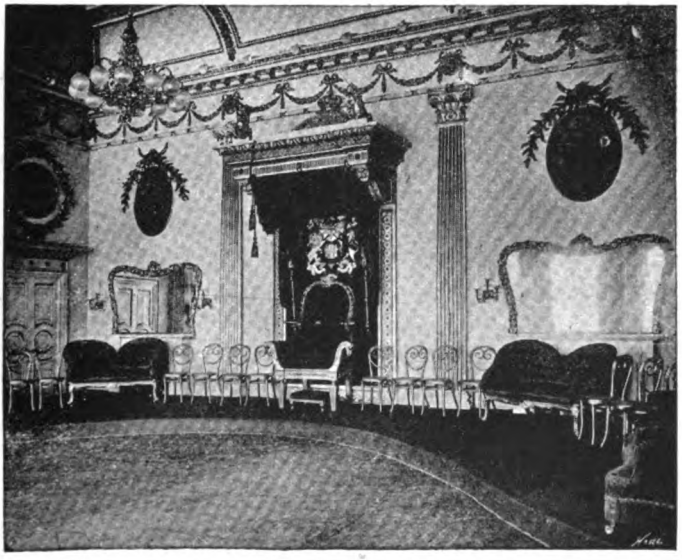
"No," said Lord Houghton, "it is not by Calverley, it is by —— But," said he, "the funniest thing I ever heard was this," and he repeated, with immense humour, and with wonderful vivacity, a set of lines which threw us all into fits of laughter. I regret I am unable to recall them. The conversation drifting to memories of some of his father's celebrated friends, His Excellency told me a delightful story of Carlyle. It appeared that the grim old Chelsea hermit had once, when a child, saved in a teacup three bright halfpence. But a poor old Shetland beggar with a bad arm came to the door one day. Carlyle gave him all his treasure at once. In after life, in referring to the incident, he used to say: "The feeling of happiness was most intense; I would give £100 now to have that feeling for one moment back again."

Mrs. Henniker and the Lord Lieutenant and myself drifted into quiet conversation, whilst the general talk buzzed around us.

She had told me that her brother had written a prize poem at Harrow, and that his recent publications, "Stray Verses," had all been done in a year.

"His verses are curiously unlike those of my father," she said. "He is very catholic in his tastes; my father's were more poems of reflection—they were full of the sentiment of his day. He was much influenced by Mathew Arnold and his school. My brother's are much more lyrical.

"It is a curious thing," continued Mrs. Henniker, "that one or two of my father's poems, which were thought least of at the time, have really become the most popular and the best known. There



ST. PATRICK'S HALL.

is a story concerning one of them which he often used to tell. He was visiting some friends here in Ireland, and the beat of the horses' feet upon the road as he drove to the house seemed to hammer out in his head certain rhythmical ideas which quickly formed themselves into rhyme. As soon as he got to the house he went to his room and wrote the words straight out. It was the well-known song beginning—

"'I wandered by the brookside,'

And having the refrain—

"'But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.'

"When he came down to dinner he showed these verses to his friends. They all declared that they were unworthy of him, and advised him to throw them into the fire. However, he did not take their advice; the moment they were published, they caught the ear of the public, they were set to music, and they were to be heard wherever one went. Indeed, a friend of his who was sailing down a river in the Southern States of North America, about a year afterwards, heard the slaves, as they hoed in the plantations, keeping time by singing a parody of the lines which had by then become universally familiar. And one day, in later years, my father was walking in London with a friend; they were passing the end of a street when they heard a man singing—he stopped and listened, and then rushed after the man. He came back a few moments afterwards, bearing a roughly printed paper in his hands.

RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES, FIRST LORD HOUGHTON.

"'I knew it was my song that he was singing,' he said, and he was perfectly right. He was much delighted.

"'It's a curious fact,' observed the Lord Lieutenant to me, 'and one which Wemyss Reid specially notes in his biography, that my father produced the greater part of his poetry between 1830 and 1840, just when he was going most into Society.'"

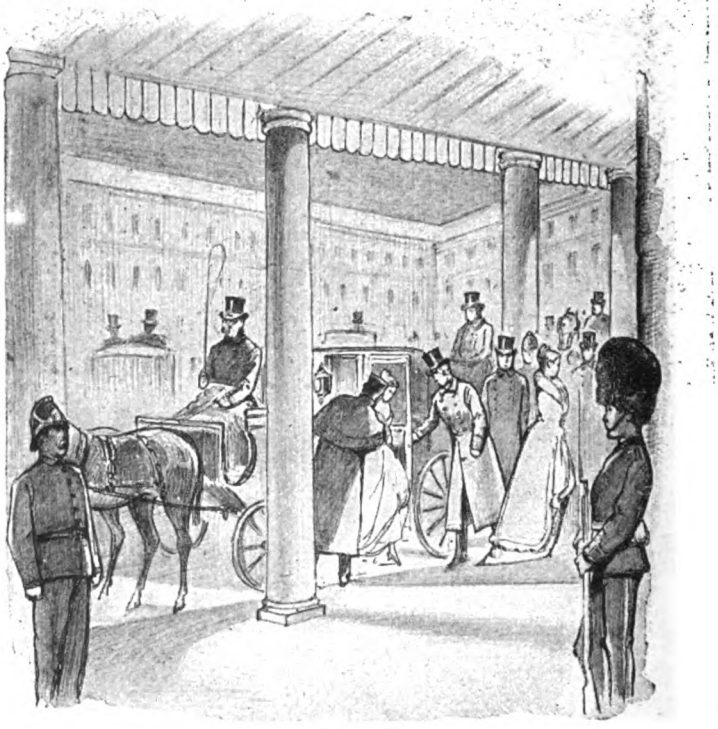
"And you've gone in a good deal for writing verses yourself, following in your father's footsteps, have you not, Mrs. Henniker?" said I. "Oh," she replied, "I began writing verses very early in my life, and the most amusing part of it is that, though I was a perfect little imp, I began with writing hymns. In fact," said she, as she showed me a letter which her father had written to a friend when she was seven years of age, "my father had to check my early attempts in that direction." I read with some amusement what Lord Houghton had written about his little daughter, and I transcribe his words the more readily that they appear to me to give a glimpse into the mind of the poet and of his ideas on the origin and making of poetry. He writes:

"The second little girl has developed into a verse writer of a very curious ability. She began theologically and wrote hymns, which I soon checked on observing that she put together words

GROUP OF A.D.C.'S.

and sentences out of the sacred verse she knew, and set her to write about things she saw and observed. What she now produces is very like the verse of William Blake, and containing many

images that she could never have read of. She cannot write, but she dictates them to her elder sister, who is astonished at the phenomenon. We, of course, do not let her see that it is anything surprising, and the chances are that it goes off as she gets older and knows more. The lyrical faculty in many nations seems to belong to a childish condition of mind, and to disappear with experience and knowledge."

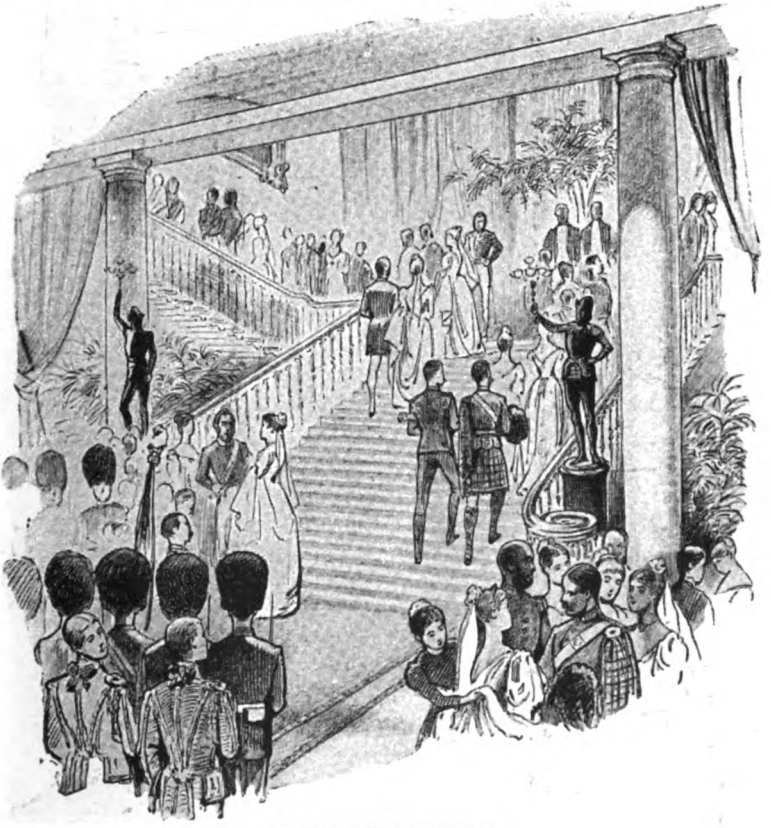


DEBUTANTES ARRIVING.

The conversation drifted into a discussion on the present system of interviewing, and Mrs. Henniker told me, with much amusement, of a reporter of the *St. Louis Republic* who called upon her father when he visited America, who, indeed, would not be denied, but forced his way into Lord Houghton's bedroom, where he found him actually in bed, and who, in relating what had passed between them, expressed his pleasure at having

seen "a real live lord," and recorded his opinion that he was "as easy and plain as an old shoe!"

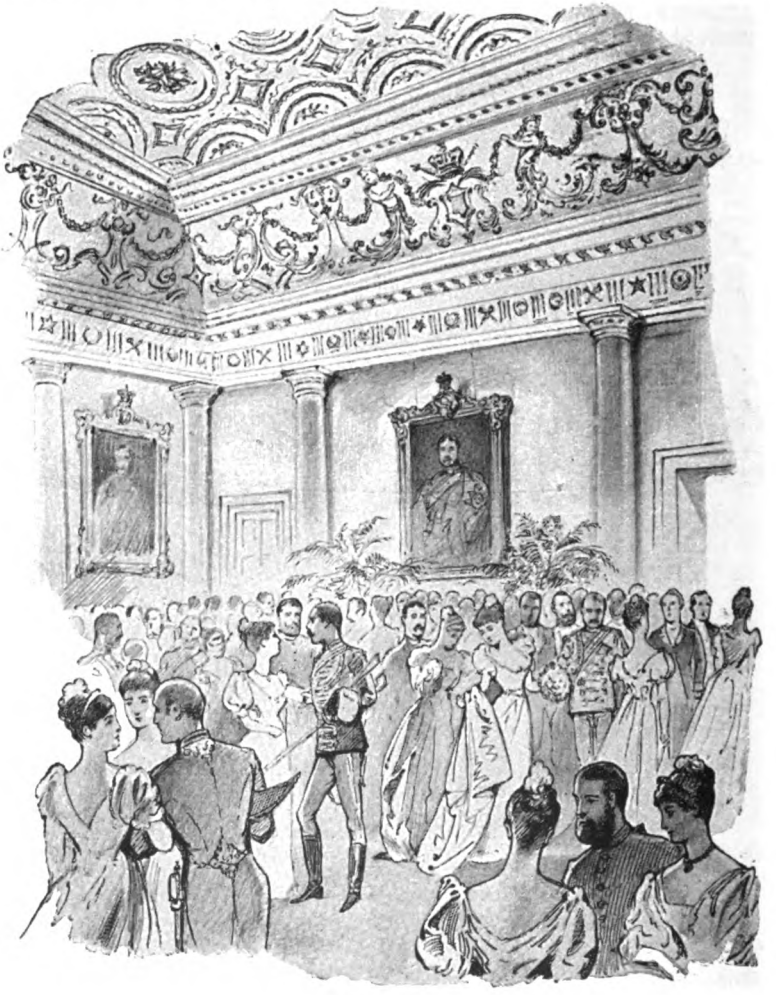
Lord Houghton must have been a welcome guest in a country where humour and the capacity for after-dinner speeches are so warmly appreciated as in America. No more brilliant after-dinner speaker ever existed than Richard



ASCENDING THE STAIRCASE.

Monckton Milnes, and the capacity for public speech, which was such a characteristic of the first Lord Houghton, exists no less gracefully in his poetic and now Vice-Regal son; but it was, perhaps, as a humorist that the father specially excelled, and in glancing through the many letters and papers which his daughter showed me I soon discovered this. Writing to his wife many years ago, he said: "Have you

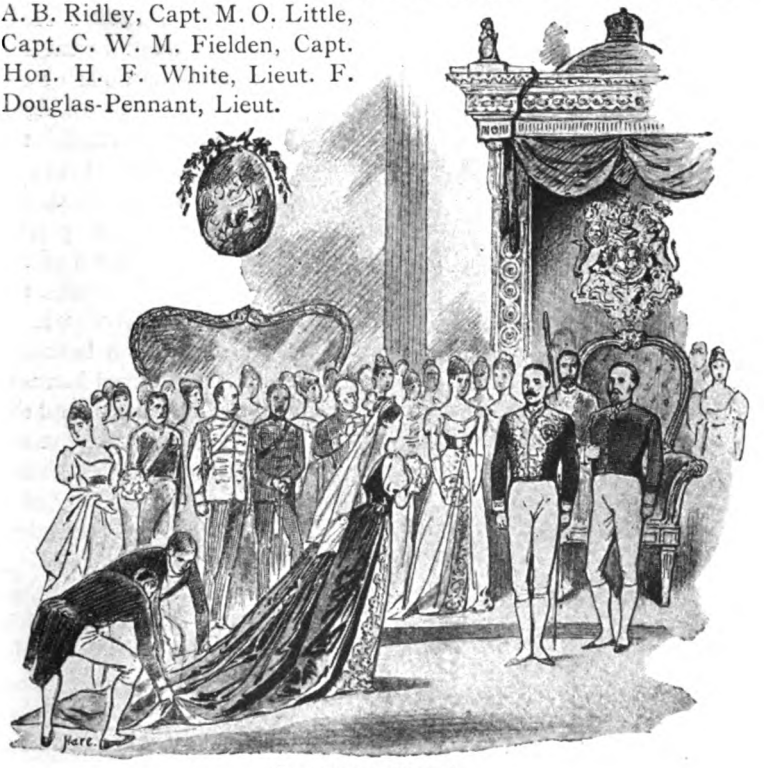
heard the last argument in favour of the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill? It is unanswerable—if you marry two sisters, you've only one mother-in-law." And again, on another occasion, in writing to his sister, he quaintly remarks: "I left Alfred



"WAITING."

Tennyson in our rooms at the hotel; he is strictly *incognito*, and known by everybody except T., who asked him if he was a Southerner, assuming that he was an American."

We sat talking long, revolving many memories, until the shades of evening darkened down upon the beautiful room, and broke up the party. I joined the A.D.C.'s in their own special sanctum. There are nine on the Staff, of whom two are always on duty. Their names are as follows:—Capt. H. Streatfield, Capt. A. B. Ridley, Capt. M. O. Little, Capt. C. W. M. Fielden, Capt. Hon. H. F. White, Lieut. F. Douglas-Pennant, Lieut.



"TO BE PRESENTED."

A. P. M. Burke, Lieut. S. J. Meyrick, Lieut. C. P. Foley, and the Hon. C. B. Fulke-Greville. From what they told me I judged that the life at the Castle must be singularly pleasant and interesting. Capt. Streatfield, who is a very *doyen* among A.D.C.'s, has in that capacity led a life full of interest and variety, for he told me that for some years he was A.D.C. to the Governor-General of Canada, and that later on in life he accompanied the late Duke of Clarence as his A.D.C. in India.

The evening drifted on until it was time to dress for dinner, and we assembled, a large party of men and women, many of

whom were in uniform, and some of whom displayed the pale Vice-Regal blue of the household facings in the long drawing room next to that room in which we had had afternoon tea. As His Excellency appeared, preceded by the State Steward, Capt. the Hon. H. White, and followed by Lord Charlemont, the Comptroller, we all passed through the rooms to St. Patrick's Hall, while the band played some well-known tunes. Capt. Streatfield had cleverly sketched for me in the afternoon the curious device formed by the tables, which was originally designed by Lord Charlemont himself, the whole giving the exact effect of a St. Andrew's Cross. Two huge spreading palms, placed in the hollows of the cross, overshadowed the Vice-Regal party, which, together with the beautiful music, the grouped banners upon the lofty walls, and the subdued lights, and the excellent dinner, all went towards the making of a very delightful evening indeed.

THE ORDEAL.

A little later on that night—and dinner upon this occasion was specially early—His Excellency held a "Drawing room." The scene upon this occasion was particularly brilliant; the long perspectives, the subdued lighting of the rooms, and the artistic grouping of rare exotics and most exquisite plants and flowers constituting a *tout ensemble*, the beauty of which will never fade from my memory. The ceremony itself was a singularly stately and graceful one. His Excellency, clad in Court dress, stood in the middle of the throne room, surrounded by the great officers of State in their robes of office. The *aides-de-camp* stood in a semicircle between the doorway and the dais. The first ladies to be presented were His Excellency's own sisters. It was specially interesting to notice the entry of the *débutantes*, many of whom were very beautiful, and almost all of whom were very graceful. Each young girl carried her train, properly arranged, upon her left arm during her progress through the corridor, drawing-room, and ante-room, until she passed the barrier and reached the entrance to

the presence chamber; there a slight touch from the first A.D.C. in waiting released it from her arm, and two ushers, who were standing opposite, spread it carefully upon the floor. I noticed that the A.D.C. was careful not to let the ladies follow one another too quickly, which was evidently a trial to some of them. At the right moment he would take the card which each lady bore in her hand, pass it on to the semicircle of *aides* who stood within the room, who in their turn passed it on to the Chamberlain, who stood at the Lord Lieutenant's right hand. He having received it, then read it aloud, and presented her to the Viceroy. The Viceroy took her by the right hand, which was always ungloved, kissed her lightly on the cheek, whilst the lady curtsied low to him; then, gracefully backing, she retired, always with her face to the dais, from the Vice-Regal presence. The gentlemen attending the drawing room were not, of course, presented. They simply passed through the throne room, several at a time, bowing two or three times to the Viceroy, and so joined their party waiting for them in the long gallery.

At the end of the "Drawing room," the Lord Lieutenant and the ladies and gentlemen of the household, and some of the State officials, formed a procession, and marched with no little grace and stateliness round the magnificent hall of St. Patrick, whilst the strains of the National Anthem re-echoed down the long corridors and out into the star-lit windy night.

CREWE HALL.

The Fear of It.

By Robert Barr.

Illustrations by A. S. Boyd.

THE sea was done with him. He had struggled manfully for his life, but exhaustion came at last, and, realising the futility of further fighting, he gave up the battle. The tallest wave, the king of that roaring tumultuous procession racing from the wreck to the shore, took him in its relentless grasp, held him towering for a moment against the sky, whirled his heels in the air, dashed him senseless on the sand, and, finally, rolled him over and over, a helpless bundle, high up upon the sandy beach.

Human life seems of little account when we think of the trifles that make towards the extinction or the extension of it. If the wave that bore Stanford had been a little less tall, he would have been drawn back into the sea by one that followed. If, as a helpless bundle, he had been turned over one time more or one less, his mouth would have pressed into the sand, and he would have died. As it was, he lay on his back with arms outstretched on either side, and a handful of dissolving sand in one clinched fist. Succeeding waves sometimes touched him, but he lay there unmolested by the sea with his white face turned to the sky.

Oblivion has no calendar. A moment or an eternity are the same to it. When consciousness slowly returned, he neither knew nor cared how time had fled. He was not quite sure that he was alive, but weakness rather than fear kept him from opening his eyes to find out whether the world they would look upon was the world they had last gazed at. His interest, however, was speedily stimulated by the sound of the English tongue. He was still too much dazed to wonder at it, and to remember that he was cast away on some unknown island in the Southern Seas. But the purport of the words startled him.

"Let us be thankful. He is undoubtedly dead." This was said in a tone of infinite satisfaction.

There seemed to be a murmur of pleasure at the announcement from those who were with the speaker. Stanford slowly opened his eyes, wondering what these savages were who rejoiced in the death of an inoffensive stranger cast upon their shores. He saw a group standing around him, but his attention speedily became concentrated on one face. The owner of it, he

judged, was not more than nineteen years of age, and the face—at least so it seemed to Stanford at the time — was the most beautiful he had ever beheld. There was an expression of sweet gladness upon it until her eyes met his, then the joy faded from the face, and a look of dismay took its place. The girl seemed to catch her breath in fear, and tears filled her eyes.

"HE IS UNDOUBTEDLY DEAD."

"Oh," she cried, "he is going to live."
She covered her face with her hands, and sobbed.

Stanford closed his eyes wearily. "I am evidently insane," he said to himself. Then, losing faith in the reality of things, he lost consciousness as well, and when his senses came to him again he found himself lying on a bed in a clean but scantily furnished room. Through an open window came the roar of the sea, and the thunderous boom of the falling waves brought to his mind the experiences through which he had passed. The wreck and the struggle with the waves he knew to be real, but the episode on the beach he now believed to have been but a vision resulting from his condition.

"A PLACID-FACED NURSE STOOD BY HIS BED."

A door opened noiselessly, and, before he knew of anyone's entrance, a placid-faced nurse stood by his bed and asked him how he was.

"I don't know. I am at least alive."

The nurse sighed, and cast down her eyes. Her lips moved, but she said nothing. Stanford looked at her curiously. A fear crept over him that perhaps he was hopelessly crippled for life, and that death was considered preferable to a maimed existence. He felt wearied, though not in pain, but he knew that sometimes the more desperate the hurt, the less the victim feels it at first.

"Are—are any of my—my bones broken, do you know?" he asked.

"No. You are bruised, but not badly hurt. You will soon recover."

"Ah!" said Stanford, with a sigh of relief. "By the way," he added, with sudden interest, "who was that girl who stood near me as I lay on the beach?"

"There were several."

"No, there was but one. I mean the girl with the beautiful eyes and a halo of hair like a glorified golden crown on her head."

"We speak not of our women in words like those," said the nurse, severely; "you mean Ruth, perhaps, whose hair is plentiful and yellow."

Stanford smiled. "Words matter little," he said.

"We must be temperate in speech," replied the nurse.

"We may be temperate without being teetotal. Plentiful and yellow, indeed! I have had a bad dream concerning those who found me. I thought that they—but it does not matter. She at least is not a myth. Do you happen to know if any others were saved?"

"I am thankful to be able to say that every one was drowned."

Stanford started up with horror in his eyes. The demure nurse, with sympathetic tones, bade him not excite himself. He sank back on his pillow.

"Leave the room," he cried, feebly. "Leave me—leave me." He turned his face toward the wall, while the woman left as silently as she had entered.

"HE NOTICED THAT THE DOOR HAD NO FASTENING."

When she was gone Stanford slid from the bed, intending to make his way to the door and fasten it. He feared that these savages, who wished him dead, would take measures to kill him when they saw that he was going to recover. As he leaned against the bed, he noticed that the door had no fastening. There was a rude latch, but neither lock nor bolt. The furniture of the room was of the most meagre description, clumsily made. He staggered to the open window, and looked out. The remnants of the disastrous gale blew in upon him and gave him new life, as it had formerly threatened him with death. He saw that he was

in a village of small houses, each cottage standing in its own plot of ground. It was apparently a village of one street, and over the roofs of the houses opposite he saw in the distance the white waves of the sea. What astonished him most was a church with its tapering spire at the end of the street—a wooden church such as he had seen in remote American settlements. The street was deserted, and there were no signs of life in the houses.

"I must have fallen in upon some colony of lunatics," he said to himself. "I wonder to what country these people belong—either to England or the United States, I imagine—yet in all my travels I never heard of such a colony."

There was no mirror in the room, and it was impossible for him to know how he looked. His clothes were dry and powdered with salt. He arranged them as well as he could, and slipped out of the house unnoticed. When he reached the outskirts of the village he saw that the inhabitants, both men and women, were working in the fields some distance away. Coming towards the village was a girl with a water-can in either hand. She was singing as blithely as a lark until she saw Stanford, whereupon she paused both in her walk and in her song. Stanford, never a backward man, advanced, and was about to greet her when she forestalled him by saying:

"I am grieved, indeed, to see that you have recovered."

The young man's speech was frozen on his lip, and a frown settled on his brow. Seeing that he was annoyed, though why she could not guess, Ruth hastened to amend matters by adding:

"Believe me, what I say is true. I am indeed sorry."

"Sorry that I live?"

"Most heartily am I."

"It is hard to credit such a statement from one so—from you."

"Do not say so. Miriam has already charged me with being glad that you were not drowned. It would pain me deeply if you also believed as she does."

The girl looked at him with swimming eyes, and the young man knew not what to answer. Finally he said:

"There is some horrible mistake. I cannot make it out. Perhaps our words, though apparently the same, have a different meaning. Sit down, Ruth, I want to ask you some questions."

Ruth cast a timorous glance towards the workers, and murmured something about not having much time to spare, but she placed the water-cans on the ground and sank down on the grass.

Stanford throwing himself on the sward at her feet, but, seeing that she shrank back, he drew himself further from her, resting where he might gaze upon her face.

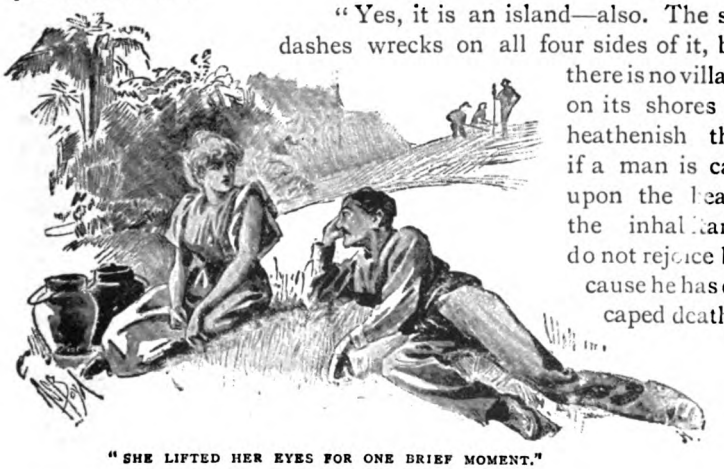
Ruth's eyes were downcast, which was necessary, for she occupied herself in pulling blade after blade of grass, sometimes weaving them together. Stanford had said he wished to question her, but he apparently forgot his intention, for he seemed wholly satisfied with merely looking at her. After the silence had lasted for some time, she lifted her eyes for one brief moment, and then asked the first question herself.

"From what land do you come?"

"From England."

"Ah! that also is an island, is it not?"

He laughed at the "also," and remembered that he had some questions to ask.



"SHE LIFTED HER EYES FOR ONE BRIEF MOMENT."

"Yes, it is an island—also. The sea dashes wrecks on all four sides of it, but there is no village on its shores so heathenish that if a man is cast upon the beach the inhabitants do not rejoice because he has escaped death."

Ruth looked at him with amazement in her eyes.

"Is there, then, no religion in England?"

"Religion? England is the most religious country on the face of the earth. There are more cathedrals, more churches, more places of worship in England than in any other State that I know of. We send missionaries to all heathenish lands. The Government, itself, supports the Church.'

"I fear, then, I mistook your meaning. I thought from what you said that the people of England feared death, and did not welcome it or rejoice when one of their number died."

"They do fear death, and they do not rejoice when it comes. Far from it. From the peer to the beggar, everyone fights death as long as he can; the oldest cling to life as eagerly as the youngest. Not a man but will spend his last gold piece to ward off the inevitable even for an hour."

"Gold piece—what is that?"

Stanford plunged his hand into his pocket.

"Ah!" he said, "there are some coins left. Here is a gold piece."

The girl took it, and looked at it with keen interest.

"Isn't it pretty?" she said, holding the yellow coin on her pink palm, and glancing up at him.

"That is the general opinion. To accumulate coins like that, men will lie, and cheat, and steal—yes, and work. Although they will give their last sovereign to prolong their lives, yet will they risk life itself to accumulate gold. Every business in England is formed merely for the gathering together of bits of metal like that in your hand; huge companies of men are formed so that it may be piled up in greater quantities. The man who has most gold has most power, and is generally the most respected; the company which makes most money is the one people are most anxious to belong to."

Ruth listened to him with wonder and dismay in her eyes. As he talked she shuddered, and allowed the yellow coin to slip from her hand to the ground.

"No wonder such a people fears death."

"Do you not fear death?"

"How can we, when we believe in heaven?"

"But would you not be sorry if someone died whom you loved?"

"How could we be so selfish? Would you be sorry if your brother, or someone you loved, became possessed of whatever you value in England—a large quantity of this gold, for instance?"

"Certainly not. But then you see—well, it isn't exactly the same thing. If one you care for dies you are separated from him, and——"

"But only for a short time, and that gives but another reason for welcoming death. It seems impossible that Christian people should fear to enter Heaven. Now I begin to understand why our forefathers left England, and why our teachers will never tell us anything about the people there. I wonder why missionaries are not sent to England to teach them the truth, and try to civilise the people?"

"That would, indeed, be coals to Newcastle. But here comes one of the workers."

"It is my father," cried the girl, rising. "I fear I have been loitering. I never did such a thing before."

The man who approached was stern of countenance.

"Ruth," he said, "the workers are athirst.'

The girl, without reply, picked up her pails and departed.

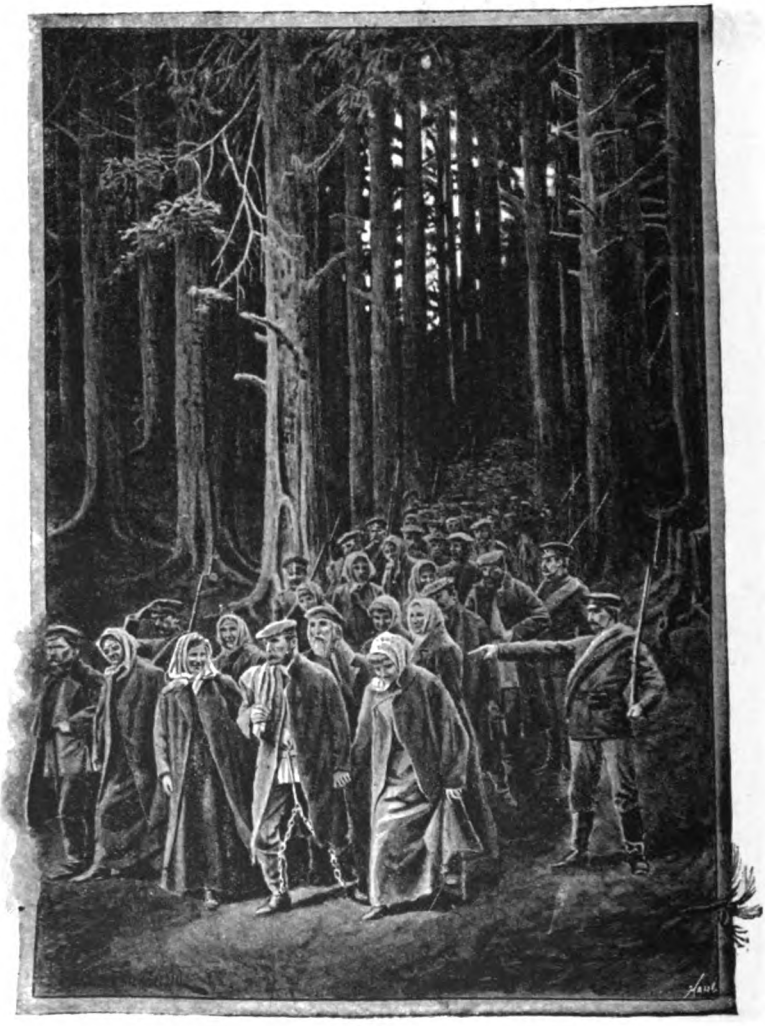
"I have been receiving," said the young man, colouring slightly, "some instruction regarding your belief. I had been puzzled by several remarks I heard, and wished to make inquiries regarding them."

'RUTH AT THE WELL."

"It is more fitting," said the man, coldly, "that you should receive instruction from me or from some of the elders than from one of the youngest in the community. When you are so far recovered as to be able to listen to an exposition of our views, I hope to be able to put forth such arguments as will convince you that they are the true views. If it should so happen that my arguments are not convincing, then I must request that you will hold no communication with our younger members. They must not be contaminated by the heresies of the outside world."

Stanford looked at Ruth standing beside the village well.

"Sir," he said, "you underrate the argumentative powers of the younger members. There is a text bearing upon the subject which I need not recall to you. I am already convinced."



POLITICAL EXILES EN ROUTE FOR SIBERIA

Memoirs of a Female Nihilist.

By Sophie Wassilieff.

Illustrations by J. St. M. Fitz-Gerald.

INTRODUCTION.

By Mrs. Mona Caird.

IN giving to the world her exciting and terrible story, "Mademoiselle Sophie" has also conveyed incidentally some idea of her remarkable character. As I had the privilege of hearing from her own lips all that she relates in this series of papers, I can supplement her unintentional self-portraiture by recording the impression that she made upon me at our first meeting.

I had always taken a strong interest in the political movements of Russia and in the Slavonic races whose character and temperament have something more or less mysterious to the Western mind. The Russian novel presents rather than explains this mystery. It is perhaps to the Tartar blood that we must attribute the incomprehensible element. Between the East and the West, there is, psychologically speaking, a great gulf fixed.

There are times when the reader of Russian fiction begins to wonder whether he or the author is not a little off his mental balance, so fantastic, so inconsequent, yet so insanely logical (so to put it) are the beings with whom he finds himself surrounded—beings, however, evidently and bewilderingly human, so that though they may appear scarcely in their right minds (as we should judge our compatriots), they can never be mistaken for mere figures of sawdust and plaster such as people extensive realms of Western fiction. It is the reality of the characters, coupled with their eccentric demeanour (the most humdrum Slav appears wildly original to the inexperienced Anglo-Saxon), that stirs anxiety.

Would "Mademoiselle Sophie" be like one of these erratic creations, or would she resemble the heroines of Russian political history whose marvellous courage and endurance excite the wonder of all who can even dimly realise what it must be to live

from moment to moment in imminent peril of life and limb, and in ceaseless anxiety as to the fate of relatives and friends? Of all the trials that "Mademoiselle Sophie" went through, this last, she told me, was the worst. The absolute silence, the absolute ignorance in which she had to pass her days, seemed to have broken her wonderful spirit more than any other hardship.

It is not every day in the Nineteenth century that one comes in contact with a human being who has had to submit to the "ordeal by fire" in this literal mediæval fashion; who has endured perils, insults, physical privations and torments, coupled with intense and ceaseless anxiety for years; and this in extreme youth before the troubles and difficulties of life have more gradually and gently taught the lessons of endurance and silent courage that probably have to be learnt by all who are destined to develop and gather force as they go, and not to dwindle and weaken, as seems to be the lot of those less fortunate in circumstance or less well-equipped at birth for the struggles that in one form or another present themselves in every career.

Russia is a nation that may almost be said to have preserved to this day the conditions of the Middle Ages. It affords, therefore, to the curious an opportunity for the study of the effect upon human character of these conditions. Here are still retained, to all intents and purposes, the thumbscrew and the rack; indeed, this is the case in a literal sense, for "Mademoiselle Sophie" told me that it was certain that prisoners were sometimes tortured in secret, after the good old-fashioned methods, not exactly officially (since the matter was kept more or less dark), but nevertheless by men in the employment of the Government who were able to take advantage of the powers bestowed by their office to practise despotism even to this extreme.

Many of the so-called Nihilists or Revolutionists (as "Mademoiselle Sophie" insisted on styling the more moderate party to which she belongs) seem to stand in the position of the early Protestants, when they protested against the abuses of the Catholic Church while retaining their reverence for the institution itself.

It is not against the Government, so much as against the illegal and tyrannous cruelty practised by many of its officials, that a certain section of the "Revolutionists" raise a remonstrance. It is astonishing how conservative some of these terrible "Revolutionists" appear to be. Many of them still look to the Tzar with a pathetic conviction that all would be well, if only the

cry of his distressed children could reach his paternal ears. They ask so little; they would be thankful for such small mercies; yet there is apparently slight hope that the Tzar will be allowed to hear or would listen to the appeal of his much-enduring people!

"Mademoiselle Sophie" had promised to take tea with me on a particular afternoon, and to give me an account of her imprisonment. I had heard the general outlines before, but was anxious to hear her tell the tale in her own words. I may mention here that "Mademoiselle Sophie's" acquaintance had been *sought*, and that the idea of writing her story for publication in England did not emanate from her. Of her veracity there is not the faintest question; moreover, there was, evidently, no motive for deception.

MRS. MONA CAIRD.

Though I had heard that "Mademoiselle Sophie" had been a mere girl when she was first sent to face the rigours of a Russian prison, I was scarcely prepared to see anyone so young and fragile-looking as the lady in black who entered the room, with a quiet, reserved manner, courteous and dignified. I felt something like a thrill of dismay when I realised that it was an extremely sensitive woman who had gone through the scenes that she describes in these pages. She had been the more ill-prepared for the hardships of prison-life from having passed her childhood amidst every care and comfort.

She was singularly reticent and self-possessed. In speaking, there was no emotional emphasis, whatever she might be saying. The only comment on her narrative that one could detect was an occasional touch of cold scorn or irony. The more terrible the incident that she related, the more quiet became her tones.

It seemed as if the flame of indignation had burnt itself out in the years of suffering that she had passed through. The traces of those years were in her face. Its very stillness and pallor

seemed to tell the tale of pain endured silently and in solitude for so long. It was written, too, in the steadfast quality that expressed itself in her whole bearing, and in the entire absence of any petty self-consciousness. In spite of the awful nervous strain that she had endured she had no little restless habits or movements of any kind.

One felt in her a vast reserve force and a dauntless courage. It was courage of a kind that is almost terrible, for it accompanied a highly organised and imaginative temperament, a nervous temperament, be it observed, which implies *controlled* and *ordered*, not *uncontrolled* and *disordered* nervous power. The half-hysterical persons who class themselves among the possessors of this temperament are apt to overlook that important distinction.

"Mademoiselle Sophie" gained none of her courage from insensitiveness. Her whole life was dedicated to the cause of her country, and the personal elements had been sacrificed to this object beyond herself: the forlorn hope which has already claimed so many of the noblest and bravest spirits in all the Tzar's dominions.

After "Mademoiselle Sophie" left that afternoon, I could not help placing her in imagination beside the average woman that our own civilisation has produced (not a fair comparison doubtless); and the latter seemed painfully small in aim and motive, pitifully petty and fussy and lacking in repose and dignity when compared with the calm heroine of this Russian romance.

But human beings are the creations of their circumstances, and the circumstances of a Western woman's life are not favourable to the development of the grander qualities, though, indeed, they are often harassing and bewildering, and cruel enough to demand heroism as great even as that of "Mademoiselle Sophie." I think it would be salutary for all of us—men as well as women of the West—to come more often within the influence of such natures as this; natures that command the tribute of admiration and the reverence that one must instantly yield to great moral strength and nobility.

Memoirs of a Female Nihilist.

By Sophie Wassilieff.

Illustrations by J. St. M. Fitz-Gerald.

I.

DEAR MESSIEURS,

You have asked me for a few reminiscences of the time when I took a more or less active part in the Revolutionary Movement in Russia—a sort of autobiographical sketch, to be published in English. As I never had the good fortune to render any really important service to my country, I have no right to draw public attention upon myself, and no wish to do so. But my experiences, of which I have told you a good deal by word of mouth, have been, save for sundry personal details, very like those of thousands of other young Russians, who, unwilling and unable to accept quietly the order of things that weighs so heavily upon their country, have devoted all their strength and all their faculties to the great struggle for freedom, which you of Western Europe call the Nihilistic Movement. In your opinion, it is just because of its simplicity and its likeness to many others, that the story of my life may possess some value; and perhaps you are right. At any rate, since to interest if but a small number of people in the lot of those who serve "the cause," will be to serve the cause still further—and it is, for the rest, the cause of common humanity and justice—I herewith put at your disposition such of my souvenirs as I am at liberty to make public, at the same time reminding you of your promise to preserve my incognito intact.

And now for my facts:

It was the year 188—. My brother had been arrested during the winter. At the beginning of the spring I went to X——, to the house of my uncle and aunt, to pass the summer, and to rest after the emotional strain I had been under. At least, such was the explanation of my leaving St. Petersburg which I gave to the police of that city, when I asked them for a passport for the interior of the Empire. As a matter of fact, I was anxious to see certain of my brother's friends at X——, with the object of trying, with their assistance, to destroy the traces of his last visit there—traces which, if discovered by the police, might be extremely

detrimental to Serge's interests. On my arrival in the town—where, by the way, it was my habit to pass all my holidays—I found the Nihilist community, many of whose members were old friends of mine, in serious trouble. The police had just been

"SERGE WAS ARRESTED."

making a terrible raid among them. Many had been arrested. The others, under strict surveillance, were daily expecting to be arrested in their turn.

This circumstance, apart from the regret it caused me, had a considerable influence upon my relations with the local revolutionary organisation. The centre of this organisation was a group of young men and women, who, besides the revolutionary agitation that they were carrying on, were in correspondence with other groups of the same sort, for the purpose of exchanging books, helping comrades to escape from prison and fly the country, and so forth. X—— is a big town, chiefly given up to manufactures; and at the time of which I speak there was gathered around this central group a sort of duplex association, composed, on the one hand, of well-educated young folks, and, on the other, of working men. As a precautionary measure, the association as a whole was split up into a number of small circles, or clubs, that met separately, and knew nothing of one another. It was especially in these smaller clubs that the members of the central group carried on their propaganda, the aim of which was then, as it is to-day, to alter the present method of government, to rid the country of the despotism that bears so heavily upon it, and stops its development, and thus to make possible at once an improvement in the condition of the labouring classes, and a reconstruction of Russian society upon a more rational and a more humane basis. With the working people, however, the revolutionists were often forced to begin by teaching th m to read and write. Outside of all these clubs, there were in the town a good many people who, while taking no direct part in the movement, sympathised with it, and did what they could to aid and abet it by gifts of money, and by providing refuge for such

"TEACHING THEM TO READ AND WRITE."

of the active members as were hiding from the police. With these very useful friends the revolutionists kept up more or less continuous relations.

The programme of the group at X—— needed for its accomplishment a large force of devoted and trustworthy workers; and the arrests that had been made just before my arrival had considerably thinned their ranks. This circumstance, as I have said, changed the nature of my own relations with the revolutionary organisation. Hitherto my visits to the town had been short, only to spend my school holidays in fact. Very young, moreover, I had never belonged to any of the clubs; and my friendships with their members had been purely personal. Now, however, I was older, and I had come to stop at X—— for several months. In the face of the gaps the late arrests had made in the little army of revolutionists, I felt that I must enlist. I offered my services, and they were accepted.

Towards the middle of the summer, my uncle and aunt went to Moroznoië, a little village near the town where their property lay. Leaving St. Petersburg before the end of the University year, I, a student of medicine, had been obliged to put off my examinations until the autumn. These examinations, or rather, my necessity to work and prepare for them, coupled with the presence of a fine public library at X——, gave me the pretext I needed to stay behind during the family villegiatura. After some opposition, and a good deal of talk about the superiority of country air, my uncle and aunt consented—the more easily, perhaps, because, after all, I was not to be alone; my Aunt Vera and two servants were to remain in the town house. Besides, my uncle and his wife were often coming back for a day or two at a time, and I promised to pass all my Sundays with them. This arrangement suited me perfectly. My Aunt Vera, my dead father's sister, was the sweetest and gentlest of women, an invalid, with an infinite tenderness for Serge and myself, the orphans of her favourite brother. The servants also, an old nurse and a gardener, were entirely devoted to my family and to me. I was therefore free, mistress of the house, of my time, of myself. Divided between my studies, a few visits paid and received, and my weekly trip to Moroznoië, my life flowed peacefully, monotonously enough—on the surface.

Down deep, alas! it was not the same. Our revolutionary group was being harried by the police, and their arrests and domiciliary visits were conducted with so much skill and certainty,

we were forced to believe at last that we were betrayed by a traitor or a spy among our own numbers. Strictly watched by the police, who kept us "moving on," avoided on that account by some of our friends, and knowing perfectly well that a single false step

"WE ARE BETRAYED!"

might bring ruin not only upon ourselves, but upon many others, we were obliged to be extremely cautious, and not to meet too often. A few furtive interviews now and again for the interchange of news, a few sparsely attended rendezvous for the purpose of

keeping the threads of our organisation together, were pretty nearly all that we thought safe to permit ourselves. This mode of life—so tranquil to outward appearance, but in reality so full of anxiety for each and all; a life without a to-morrow, so that when we parted we did not know whether we should ever meet again, and it became our habit to say *Adieu* instead of *Au revoir*—lasted for me about five months. Melancholy enough, indeed, it had notwithstanding a charm of its own, a charm that sprang partly, perhaps, from the consciousness of dangers incurred for a noble object, and from the feeling of grave moral responsibility that we all had. A few episodes of that time are deeply fixed in my memory. A meeting we held one evening at twilight in a rich park near the town, a park that belonged to a high personage at the Imperial Court, whose son was one of us. There we met and whispered, and the murmur of the leaves overhead and the deepening shadows of the nightfall lent an intense colour of poetry to the situation. And then another meeting, in the poor little lodging of a factory-operative —a special meeting, called because our suspicions of treason within our own ranks had centred now upon a certain individual, a student, a college friend of my cousins, a constant visitor at our house. At this meeting a plan was adopted to test our suspect, and prove whether or not he was the guilty man. I, the next time he called, was to put him on a false scent; I was to tell him that a reunion of Nihilists would be held at a given place and a given time; and then we would await developments. I was also to draw him out, if possible, and make him convict himself from his own mouth. But this I could not do. I put him on the false scent; but I couldn't draw him out. It is terrible to hold the life of a human being between your hands, even though that human being be the basest of cowards and traitors.

Well, at the time and place that I told him of, surely enough, the police turned up, and naturally they found nobody there. But during the two following nights twenty fresh arrests took place; and I was one of those arrested. My cousins' friend, feeling himself discovered and menaced, had made haste to deliver us into the hands of our enemies!

That evening I had come home rather late, and had then sat and chatted for a long while with Aunt Vera, so that it was well towards midnight before I started to go to bed. Half-way upstairs, I was stopped by a noise; footsteps and stifled voices, mingling with the clang of spurs and sabres. I waited a moment,

to take breath, which had failed me suddenly; then I went back downstairs. A violent pull at the bell, an imperative pull, sounded at the garden gate; and in a moment was followed by another at the door of the house. It woke the old nurse, and brought my aunt Vera from her room. Having been a little forewarned by me of the possibility of such a visit as this, she questioned me with a frightened glance. I answered "Yes," by a sign of the head, and begged her under my breath to delay "them" as long as possible before letting "them" come in. The idea of being able to render me a service, perhaps the last, gave her strength and courage; and while slowly, very slowly, she moved towards the door, where the nocturnal visitors were getting impatient and trying to force the lock, I went into the dining-room. A moment later I heard her sweet trembling voice assuring Monsieur le Colonel de Gendarmerie that there was no one in the house; all the family were at Moroznoië; my uncle had been in town on Monday, but had left again on Tuesday, and wouldn't return till the end of next week; and there was no one here but herself, the speaker, and a young lady visiting her. In this little respite, which I had arranged for myself without too well knowing why, I remained inert in the room, lighted feebly by a single candle, and tried to gather my thoughts together: they were slow enough to respond to my efforts. My first notion was that of flight, and, automatically, I opened a window. Close at hand, behind some shrubbery, I perceived the glitter of a gendarme's uniform. There would surely be others in the garden and in the court-yard; and for the

"I WAITED A MOMENT TO TAKE BREATH."

rest, fly—? How, and whither? I shut the window, and coming back to the middle of the room, I caught a glimpse of myself in the chimney-glass. I was very pale. Was I going to be a coward? This question, and that pale face in the mirror, awoke in me other thoughts, brought back to my memory other faces:

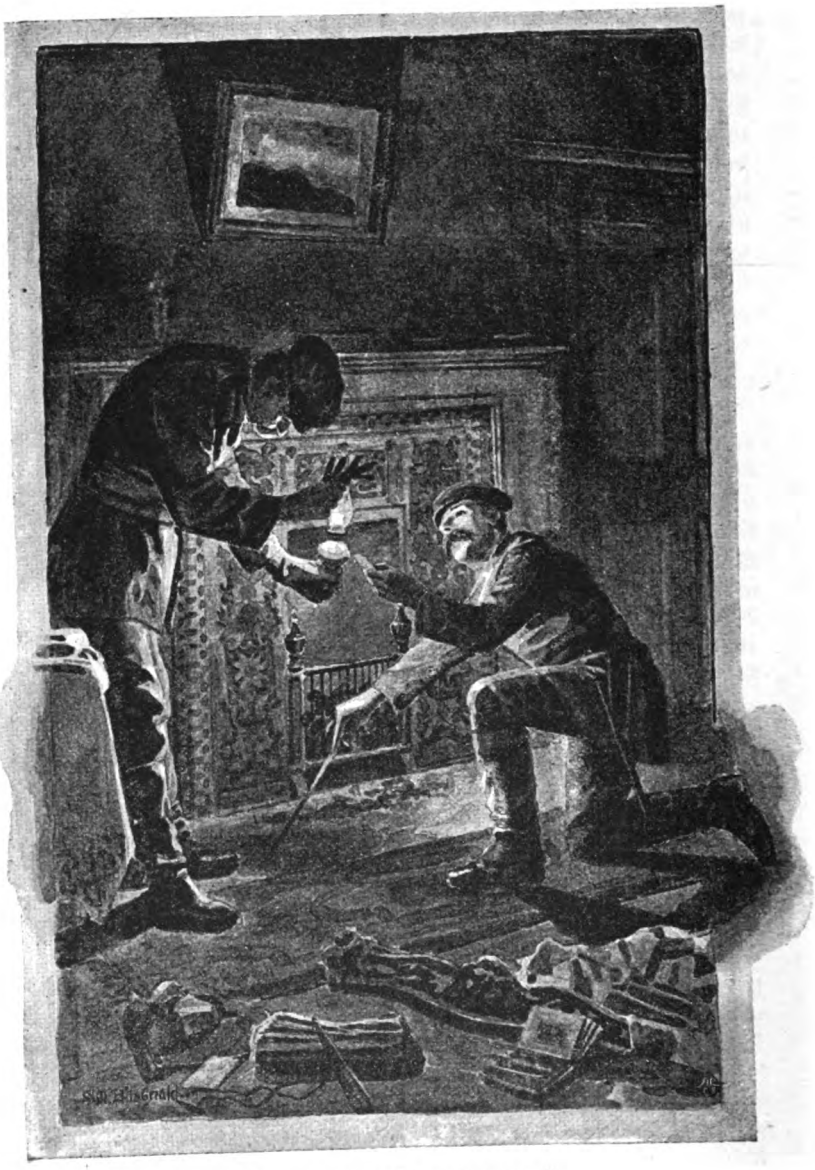
"MET HIM WITH A GAZE AS FIXED AND HAUGHTY AS HIS OWN."

that of my brother, who, a few months before, had gone so bravely from his home, to which he would never return, to the prison that he would perhaps never leave; those of friends lately arrested; those of so many, many noble men and women. Was I going to be a coward? So the examples set by these others turned my

attention from myself, calmed me, gave me strength. I could hear the voice of Colonel P——, who, impatient of my aunt's parleying, briefly bade her hold her tongue, and conduct him to the presence of her niece, Mademoiselle Sophie. That voice, rude and gross, had the effect of changing the moral depression which I had felt a moment ago into a sort of intense nervous excitement; and at the moment when the Colonel, followed by his men, appeared upon the threshold of the dining-room, honouring me with the very least respectful of bows, I, instead of saluting him in return, met him with a gaze as fixed and haughty as his own.

A minute later the Colonel was installed at the dinner-table, with the whole household arraigned before him, and everybody forbidden to leave the room. He asked my aunt Vera for the keys of the house, and the search began. The gendarmes scattered themselves through all the rooms, through the garden, the court-yard, the offices, and turned everything upside down, emptying wardrobes and cupboards, unmaking the beds, moving the articles of furniture to see that nothing was hidden behind them, and trying the screws to discover if there were any secret drawers. In my bedroom, which was of course the object of a very particular attention, a spy dressed in civilian's costume got up on the tables and chairs, and tapped on the walls. Another drew the ashes, still hot, from the stove, and examined them by the light of a lamp, held by a big gendarme. From time to time these men would come back to the dining-room, bringing armfuls of books, and school papers belonging to my cousins, which they would deposit upon the table before Colonel P——. After looking them over, he would throw them aside with such manifest ill humour, that I, who by this time had myself completely under control, couldn't let the occasion pass to condole with him on the sad nature of his trade. The whole search was a useless and odious farce, for I knew that there was nothing in the house of the kind they were looking for. Still I wasn't sorry to let them prolong it, for that gave me more time to stay there at home, beside my aunt Vera, who, smaller and feebler and paler than ever, turned her dear eyes, full of fear and tenderness, upon my face, and kept stroking my hand with her two trembling ones.

The search was nearly over, when a gendarme came in from the stable with a great parcel of books, done up in green cloth, which he laid before the Colonel. Opened, the parcel proved to contain not books only, but *forbidden* books—books by Herbert Spencer, by Mr. Ruskin, by Monsieur Renan! I was astonished



"A LAMP HELD BY A BIG GENDARME."

at seeing them, and my first thought was that they belonged to my brother, who might have forgotten them there in the stable, or to my cousins, who, without being revolutionists, were interested in forbidden literature just because it was forbidden. So when the Colonel, having finished his inspection of them, asked me whom they belonged to, I answered quietly, "To me." My aunt Vera, to whom I had always promised never to bring "forbidden" things into the house, looked at me sadly, reproachfully. Ah! my dear aunt, I lied in saying they were mine; but in my situation a few forbidden books couldn't matter much; whereas for the others, for my innocent cousins—who knows what serious trouble they might have got them into?

The Colonel demanded, "Where do these books come from?"

"From the people who had them last."

"Their names?"

"What, Colonel! You, the chief of the secret police of X——, you don't know!"

This answer kindled a light of anger in his little Chinese eyes. For my part, I had spoken very slowly, looking steadily at him, and smiling as if it were a jest; but it wasn't exactly a jest. While the Colonel had been questioning me, I had reflected. It was impossible that my cousins should have had books of this sort in their possession without speaking to me about them; and it was most unlikely that they could have belonged to Serge, who, always very careful, made it a strict rule never to bring anything of a compromising nature to our uncle's house. But I had often heard that the political police, to create evidence against people whom they strongly suspected, but who were too prudent for their taste, and also to make their arrests appear less arbitrary in the eyes of the public, had a pleasant habit of bringing "forbidden" things with them to the houses where they made their perquisitions, for the sake of supplying what they might not be able to find. Was this what had happened now? Had I been caught in such a trap?

That was what I asked the Colonel in the form of a little jest.

Did he understand? He answered with a piece of advice: that I should be less gay. For the rest, he was in a hurry; he looked at his watch; announced that all was over, and that I was under arrest; and called for witnesses to sign the *procès-verbal.* Our gardener ran out to find somebody. He came back with two people who had been attracted to our house by the lights and the noise. One was a cabman, the other was Dr. A——, a neigh-

bour who had recently come to live at X——, and whom we knew only by sight. These men stared at me with surprise and curiosity. I scarcely saw them. The words "Under arrest" had completely upset my Aunt Vera, who, till then so calm, was now crying bitterly, covering me with kisses, and repeating, "My child! My child!" The old nurse also was crying, sobbing, and muttering to herself. Just when I feel that I myself am about to give way, and cry too—that which I am anxious, most anxious, not to do—she, the old nurse, throws herself at the Colonel's feet, and begs grace for me, telling him that I am too young, too frail, to go to prison, that I have been coughing these many days, that I may die there! This makes the Colonel smile. For me, I tell the old nurse to get up. I scold her. Stupefied, trembling, she sinks to the floor in a corner of the room, and weeps for me as the Russian peasants weep for their dead, mingling with her sobs memories of our common past, praises of my good qualities, and so forth. All this, uttered in a low sing-song, is like a sort of funeral dirge.

"THROWS HERSELF AT THE COLONEL'S FEET."

I hear it still at the moment when the Colonel shuts me into a cab, with two gendarmes facing me, and another on the box beside the driver, to whom the order is given, "The fortress!"

SOPHIE WASSILIEFF.

(To be continued.)

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

BRET HARTE.

"'When a man is interviewed he, consciously or unconsciously, prepares himself for it and isn't at all natural. Suppose, for instance, you found your man in a railway car, and entered casually into conversation with him. Then you would probably get his real thoughts—the man as he is. But, of course, when a man is asked questions, and sees the answers taken down in shorthand, it is a very different thing.'"—Bret Harte.

My Servant John.

By Archibald Forbes.

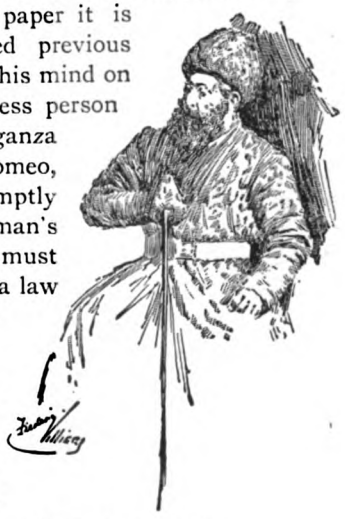
Illustrations by Frederic Villiers.

GOA is a forlorn and decayed settlement on the west coast of Hindustan, the last remaining relic of the once wide dominions of the Portuguese in India. Its inhabitants are of the Roman Catholic faith, ever since in the 16th century St. Francis Xavier, the colleague of Loyola in the foundation of the Society of Jesus, baptised the Goanese in a mass. Its once splendid capital is now a miasmatic wreck, its cathedrals and churches are ruined and roofless, and only a few black nuns remain to keep alight the sacred fire before a crumbling altar. Of all European nations the Portuguese have intermingled most freely with the dusky races over which they held dominion, with the curious result that the offspring of the cross is darker in hue than the original coloured population. To-day, the adult males of Goa, such of them as have any enterprise, emigrate into less dull and dead regions of India, and are found everywhere as cooks, ship-stewards, messengers, and in similar menial capacities. They all call themselves Portuguese, and own high-sounding Portuguese surnames. Domingo de Gonsalvez de Soto will cook your curry, and Pedro de Guiterraz is content to act as dry nurse to your wife's babies. The vice of those dusky noblemen is their addiction to drink.

"JOHN."

The better sort of these self-expatriated Goanese are eager to serve as travelling servants, and when you have the luck to chance on a reasonably sober fellow, no better servant can be found anywhere. Being a Christian, he has no caste, and has no religious scruples preventing him from wiping your razor after you have

shaved, or from eating his dinner after your shadow has happened to fall across the table. In Bombay there is a regular club or society of these Goanese travelling servants, and when the transient wayfarer lands in that city from the Peninsular and Oriental mail boat, one of the first things he is advised to do is to send round to the "Goa Club" and desire the secretary to send him a travelling servant. The result is a lottery. The man arrives, mostly a good-looking fellow, tall and slight, of very dark olive complexion, with smooth glossy hair, large soft eyes, and well-cut features. He produces a packet of chafed and dingy testimonials of character from previous employers, all full of commendation, and not one of which is worth the paper it is written on, because the good-natured previous employer was too soft of heart to speak his mind on paper. If by chance a stern and ruthless person has characterised Bartolomeo de Braganza as drunken, lazy, and dishonest, Bartolomeo, who has learnt to read English, promptly destroys the "chit," and the stern man's object is thus frustrated. But you must take the Goa man as he comes, for it is a law of the society that its members are offered in strict succession as available, and that no picking and choosing is to be allowed. When with the Prince of Wales during his tour in India, the man who fell to me, good, steady, honest Francis, was simply a dusky jewel. My comrade, Mr. Henty, the well-known author of so many boys' books, rather crowed over me because Domingo, his man, seemed more spry and smart than did my Francis. But Francis had often to attend on Henty as well as myself, when Domingo the quick-witted was lying blind drunk at the back of the tent, and once and again I have seen Henty carrying down on his back to the departing train the unconscious servant on whom at the beginning he had congratulated himself.



"THE OLD AMEER."

In the summer of 1876, Shere Ali, the old Ameer of Afghanistan, took it into his head to pick a quarrel with the Viceroy of British India. Lord Lytton was always spoiling for a fight himself, and thus there was every prospect of a lively little war. If war should occur, it was my duty to be in the thick of it, and I

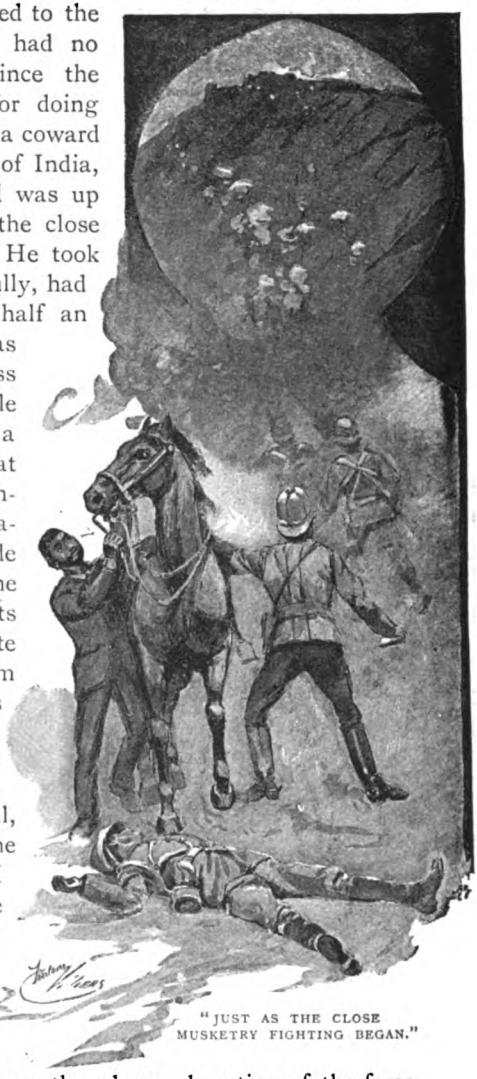
reached Bombay well in time to see the opening of the campaign. Knowing the ropes, within an hour of landing I sent to the "Goa Club" for a servant, begging that, if possible, I might have worthy Francis, who had fully satisfied me during the tour of the Prince. Francis was not available, and there was sent me a tall, prepossessing-looking young man, who presented himself as "John Assissis de Compostella de Crucis," but was quite content to answer to the name of "John."

John seemed a capable man, but was occasionally muzzy. After visiting Simla, the headquarters of the Viceroy, I started for the frontier, where the army was mustering. On the way down I spent a couple of days at Umballa, to buy kit and saddlery. The train by which I was going to travel up-country was due at Umballa about midnight. I instructed John to have everything at the depôt in good time, and went to dine at the mess of the Carbineers. In due time I reached the station, accompanied by several officers of that fine regiment. The train was at the platform; my belongings I found in a chaotic heap, crowned by John fast asleep, who, when awakened, proved to be extremely drunk. I could not dispense with the man; I had to cure him. There was but one chance of doing this. I gave him then and there a severe beating. A fatigue party of Carbineers pitched my kit into the baggage car, and threw John in after it. Next day he was sore, but penitent. There was no need to send him to Dwight, even if that establishment had been in the Punjaub instead of in Illinois. John was redeemed without resorting to the chloride of gold cure, and in his case at least, I was quite as successful a practitioner as any Dr. Keeley could have been. John de Compostella, &c., was a dead sober man during my subsequent experience of him, at least till close on the time we parted.

"EXTREMELY DRUNK."

And, once cured of fuddling, he turned out a most worthy and efficient fellow. He lacked the dash of Andreas, but he was as true as steel. In the attack on Ali Musjid, in the throat of the

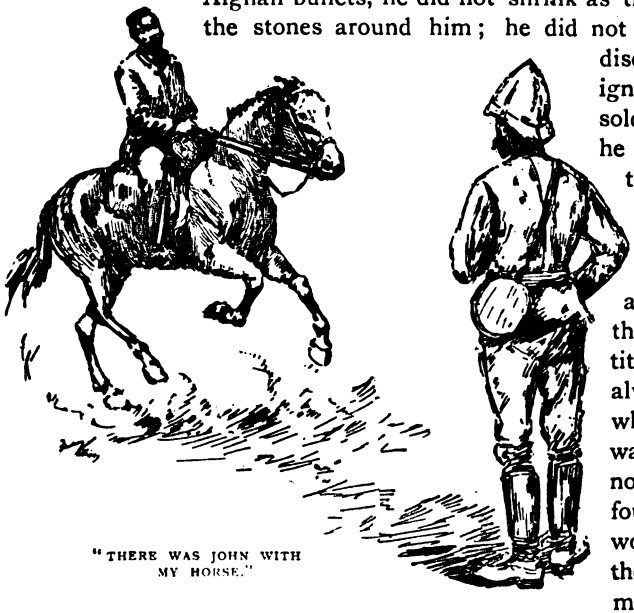
Khyber Pass, the native groom, who was leading my horse behind me, became demoralised by the rather heavy fire of big cannon balls from the fort, and skulked to the rear with the horse. John had no call to come under fire, since the groom was specially paid for doing so; but abusing the latter for a coward in the expressive vernacular of India, he laid hold of the reins, and was up right at my back just as the close musketry fighting began. He took his chances through it manfully, had my pack pony up within half an hour after the fighting was over, and before the darkness fell had cooked a capital little dinner for myself and a comrade, whose commissariat had gone astray. Next morning the fort was found evacuated. I determined to ride back down the pass to the field telegraph post at its mouth. The General wrote in my notebook a telegram announcing the good news to the Commander-in-Chief; and poor Cavagnari, the political officer, who was afterwards massacred at Cabul, wrote another message to the same effect to the Viceroy. I expected to have to walk some distance to our bivouac of the night; but lo! as I turned to go, there was John with my horse, close up.



"JUST AS THE CLOSE MUSKETRY FIGHTING BEGAN."

In one of the hill expeditions, the advanced section of the force I accompanied had to penetrate a narrow and gloomy pass which was beset on either side by swarms of Afghans, who slated us severely with their long-range jezails. With this leading detach-

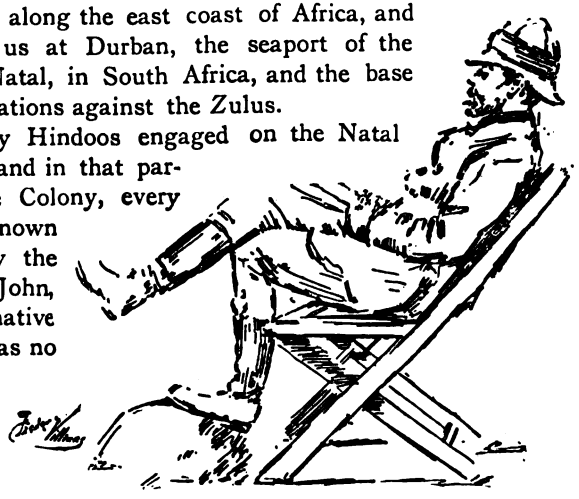
ment there somehow was no surgeon, and as men were going down and something had to be done, it devolved upon me, as having some experience in this kind of work in previous campaigns, to undertake a spell of amateur surgery. John behaved magnificently as my assistant. With his light touch and long lissom hands, the fellow seemed to have a natural instinct for successful bandaging. I was glad that we could do no more than bandage, and that we had no instruments, else I believe that John would not have hesitated to undertake a capital operation. As for the Afghan bullets, he did not shrink as they splashed on the stones around him; he did not treat them with disdain; he simply ignored them. The soldiers swore that he ought to have the war medal for the good and plucky work he was doing; and a Major protested that if his full titles, which John always gave in full when his name was asked, had not been so confoundedly long, he would have asked the General to mention the Goa man in despatches.



"THERE WAS JOHN WITH MY HORSE."

John liked war, but he was not fond of the rapid changes of temperature up on the "roof of the world" in Afghanistan. During one twenty-four hours at Jellalabad, we had one man killed by a sunstroke, and another frozen to death on sentry duty in the night. On Christmas morning, when I rose at sunrise, the thermometer was far below freezing point; the water in the brass basin in my tent was frozen solid, and I was glad to wrap myself in furs. At noon the thermometer was over a hundred in the shade, and we were all so hot as to wish with Sydney Smith that we could take off our flesh and sit in our bones. John was delighted when, as there seemed no immediate prospect of further

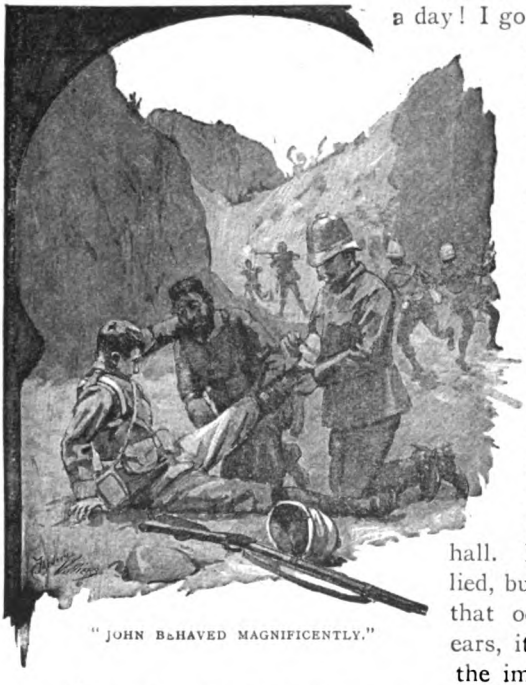
hostilities in Afghanistan, I departed therefrom to pay a visit to King Thebaw, of Burmah, who has since been disestablished. When in his capital of Mandalay, there came to me a telegram from England informing me of the massacre by the Zulus of a thousand British soldiers at Isandlwana, in South Africa, and instructing me to hurry thither with all possible speed. John had none of the Hindoo dislike to cross the "dark water," and he accompanied me to Aden, where we made connection with a potty little steamer, which called into every paltry and fever-smelling Portuguese port all along the east coast of Africa, and at length dropped us at Durban, the seaport of the British colony of Natal, in South Africa, and the base of the warlike operations against the Zulus.



"POOR CAVAGNARI."

There are many Hindoos engaged on the Natal sugar plantations, and in that particularly one-horse Colony, every native of India is known indiscriminately by the term of "coolie." John, it is true, was a native of India, but he was no "coolie"; he could read, write, and speak English, and was altogether a superior person. I would not take him up country to be bullied and demeaned as a "coolie," and I made for him an arrangement with the proprietor of my hotel that during my absence John should help to wait in his restaurant. During the Zulu campaign I was abominably served by a lazy Africander and a lazier St. Helena boy. When Ulundi was fought, and Cetewayo's kraal was burned, I was glad to return to Durban, and take passage for India. John, I found, had during my absence become one of the prominent inhabitants of Durban. He had now the full charge of the hotel restaurant—he was the centurion of the dinner-table, with men under him, to whom he said "do this," and they did it. His skill in dishes new to Natal, especially in curries, had crowded the restaurant, and the landlord had taken the opportunity of raising his tariff. He came to me privily, and said frankly that John was making his fortune for him, that he was willing to give him a

share in his business in a year's time if he would but stay, and meantime was ready to pay him a stipend of twenty dollars a week. The wages at which John served me, and I had been told I was paying him extravagantly, was eleven dollars a month. I told the landlord that I should not think of standing in the way of my man's prosperity, but would rather influence him in favour of an opportunity so promising. Then I sent for John, explained to him the hotel-keeper's proposal, and suggested that he should take time to think the matter over. John wept. "I no stay here, master, not if it was hundred rupees a day! I go with master; I no stop in Durban!" Nothing would shake his resolve, and so John and I came to England together.



"JOHN BEHAVED MAGNIFICENTLY."

The only thing John did not like in England was that the street boys insisted on regarding him as a Zulu, and treating him contumeliously accordingly. His great delight was when I went on a round of visits to country houses, and took him with me as valet. Then he was the hero of the servants' hall. I will not say that he lied, but from anecdotes of him that occasionally came to my ears, it would seem he created the impression that he habitually waded in knee-deep gore, and that he was in the habit of contemplating with equanimity battle-fields littered with the slaughtered combatants. John was quite the small lion of the hour. He had very graceful ways, and great skill in making tasteful bouquets. These he would present to the ladies of the household when they came downstairs of a morning, with a graceful salaam, and the expression of a hope that they had slept well. The spectacle of John, seen from the drawing-room windows of Chevening, Lord Stanhope's seat in Kent, as he swaggered across

the park to church one Sunday morning in frock coat and silk hat, with a buxom cook on one arm and a tall and lean lady's maid on the other, will never be effaced from the recollection of those who witnessed it with shrieks of laughter.

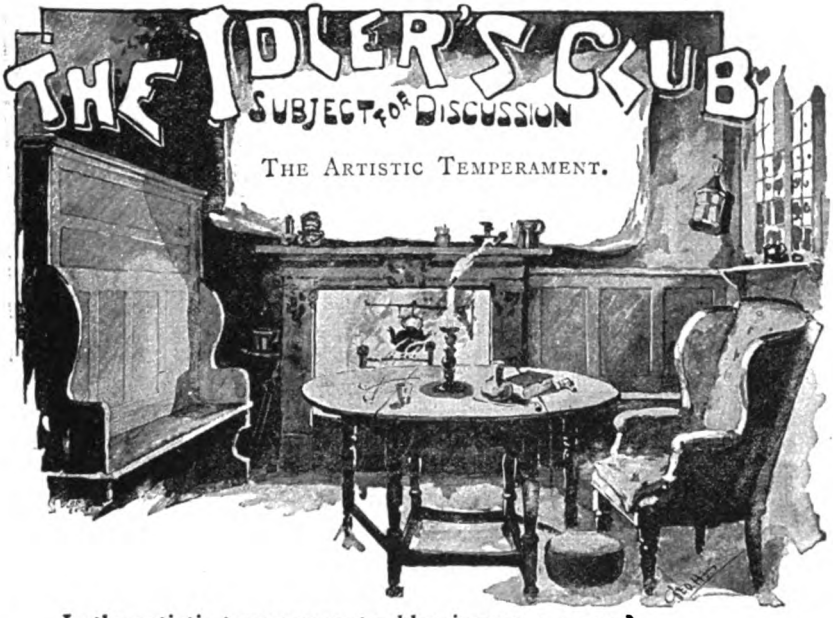
In those days I lived in a flat, my modest establishment consisting of an old female housekeeper and John. For the most part my two domestics were good friends, but there were periods of estrangement during which they were not on speaking terms; and then they sat on opposite sides of the kitchen table, and communicated with each other exclusively by written notes of an excessively formal character, passed across the table. This stiffness of etiquette had its amusing side, but was occasionally embarrassing, since neither was uniformly intelligible with the pen. The result was that sometimes I got no dinner at all, and at other times, when I was dining alone, the board groaned with the profusion, and when I had company there would not be enough to go round; these awkwardnesses arising from the absence of a good understanding between my two domestics. I could not part with the old female servant, and I began rather to tire of John, whose head had become considerably swollen because of the notice which had been taken of him. It was all very well to be in a position to gratify ladies who were giving dinner parties, and who wrote me little notes asking for the loan for a few hours of John, to make that wonderful prawn curry of which he had the sole recipe. But John used to return from that culinary operation very late, and with

"A BUXOM COOK ON ONE ARM AND A LEAN LADY'S MAID ON THE OTHER."

indications that his beverage during his exertions had not been wholly confined to water. To my knowledge he had a wife in Goa, yet I feared he had his flirtations here in London. Once I charged him with inconstancy to the lady in Goa, but he repudiated the aspersion with the quaint denial: "No, master, many ladies are loving me, but I don't love no ladies!"

However, I had in view to spend a winter in the States, and resolved to send John home. He wept copiously when I told him of this resolve, and professed his anxiety to die in my service. But I remained firm, and reminded him that he had not seen his wife in Goa for nearly three years. That argument appeared to carry little weight with him; but he tearfully submitted to the inevitable. I made him a good present, and obtained for him from the Peninsular and Oriental people a free passage to Bombay, and wages besides in the capacity of a saloon steward. I saw him off from Southampton; at the moment of parting he emitted lugubrious howls. He never fulfilled his promise of writing to me, and I gave up the expectation of hearing of him any more.

Some two years later, I went to Australia by way of San Francisco and New Zealand. At Auckland I found letters and newspapers awaiting me from Sydney and Melbourne. Among the papers was a Melbourne illustrated journal, on a page of which I found a full-length portrait of the redoubtable John, his many-syllabled name given at full length, with a memoir of his military experiences, affixed to which was a fac-simile of the certificate of character which I had given him when we parted. It was further stated that "Mr. Compostella de Crucis" was for the present serving in the capacity of butler to a financial magnate in one of the suburbs of Melbourne, but that it was his intention to purchase the goodwill of a thriving restaurant named. Among the first to greet me on the Melbourne jetty was John, radiant with delight, and eager to accompany me throughout my projected lecture tour. I dissuaded him in his own interest from doing so; and when I finally quitted the pleasant city by the shore of Hobson's Bay, John was running with success the "Maison Doré" in Burke Street. I fear, if she is alive, that his wife in Goa is a "grass widow" to this day.



Is the artistic temperament a blessing or a curse? We should first decide what the artistic temperament means. Artistic is a large word. It includes painting, acting, poetry, music, literature, preaching. Whether the temperament is a blessing or a curse largely depends upon the health of the artist. If De Quincey was an artist, the artistic temperament was a curse. So also with Thomas Carlyle. So also with Charles Lamb. The artistic temperament is creative, sympathetic, responsive; it sees everything, feels everything, realises everything, on a scale of exaggeration. It is in quest of ideals, and all ideals are more or less in the clouds, and not seldom at the tip-top of the rainbow. Those who undertake such long journeys are subject to disappointment and fatigue by the way; if ever they do come to the end of their journey it is probably in a temper of fretfulness and exasperation. A sudden knock at the door may drive an artist into hysterics. He is always working at the end of his tether. There is nothing more tantalising than an eternal quest after the ideal; like the horizon, it recedes from the traveller; like the mirage, it vanishes before the claims of hunger and thirst. On the other hand, it has enjoyments all its own. The idealist is always face to face with a great expectation. Perhaps to-night he may realise it; certainly

Dr. Parker says it depends upon the health of the artist.

in the morning it will be much nearer; and as for the third day, it will be realised in some great festival of delight. There is, too, a subtle selfishness in this quest after the ideal—the Holy Grail of the imagination. The artist keeps the secret from his brother artists until he can startle them with some gracious surprise. He almost pities them, as he thinks of the revelation that is about to dawn upon unsuspecting and slumberous minds. Postponement of this surprise is a torment to the mind which had planned its dazzling disclosure. The greatest pain of all to the artistic temperament is that it lives in the world of the Impossible and the Unattainable. That arm must be very weary which for a lifetime has been stretched out towards the horizon. Then think of the cross-lights, the mingled colours, the uncalculated relations which enter into the composition of the dreamer's life, and say whether that life is not more of a chaos than a cosmos. If the artistic temperament came within the range of our own choice and will, possibly we could do something with it; but inasmuch as it is ours by heredity, and not by adoption, we must do the best we can with the stubborn fatality.

* * * *

Mrs. Lynn Linton thinks it depends upon ourselves.

If to feel keenly be a nobler state than to drone with blunt edges through that thicket of myrtle and nightshade we call life, then is the artistic temperament a blessing. If the oyster be more enviable than the nightingale, then is it a curse. It all depends on our angle, and the colours we most prefer in the prism. He who has the artistic temperament knows depths and heights such as Those Others cannot even imagine. The feet that spring into the courts of heaven by a look or a word—by the glory of the starry night or the radiance of the dawn—stray down into the deepest abysses of hell, when Love has died or Nature forgets to smile. To the artistic temperament there is but little of the mean of things. The "Mezzo Cammin" is a line too narrow for their eager steps. Proportion is the one quality in emotional geometry which is left out of their lesson of life. Their grammar deals only with superlatives; and the positive seems to them inelastic, dead and common-place. Imaginative sympathy colours and transforms the whole picture of existence. By this sympathy the artistic of temperament knows the secrets of souls, and understands all where Those Others see nothing. And herein lies one source of those waters of bitterness which so often flood his heart. Feeling for and with his kind, as accurately as the mirror reflects the object

held before it, he finds none to share the pain, the joy, the indignation he endures by this sympathy, which is reflection. He visits the Grundyite, who says "Shocking," "Not nice," when human nature writhes in its agony and cries aloud for that drop of water which he, the virtuous conformist, refuses. He goes to the flat-footed and broad-waisted; those who plod along the beaten highway, and turn neither to the right hand nor to the left, neither to the hills nor the hollows. But he speaks a foreign language, and they heed him not. The iron-bound care nought Does that cry of suffering raise the price of stocks or lower that of grain? Tush! let it pass. To each back its own burden. So he carries the piteous tale whereby his heart is aching for sympathy, and Those Others give him stones for bread and a serpent for a fish. Then he looks up to heaven, and asks if there be indeed a God to suffer all this wrong; or if there be, How long, O Lord, how long! The artistic temperament is not merely artistic perception, with which it is so often confounded. You may be steeped to the lips in that temperament, and yet not be able to arrange flowers with deftness, draw a volute, or strike a true chord. And you may be able to do all these, and yet be dead in heart and cold in brain—a mere curly-wigged poodle doing its clever tricks with dexterity, and obedient to the hand that feeds it. The artistic temperament is not this, but something far different. Would you know what it is, and what it brings? It is the Key of Life, without which no one can understand the mysteries nor hear the secret music; and it plants a dagger in the flesh, with the handle outward. And at this handle, the careless, the brutal, the malicious, and the dense witted—all Those Others—lunge, pull, and twist by turns. But they do not see the blood trickling from the wound; and they would neither care nor yet desist if they did.

* * * *

Rutland Barrington regards it as a mixed blessing.

The artistic temperament is a most decidedly "mixed" blessing, and the more artistic the more mixed! This is strongly demonstrated to me personally in the person of a *friend* of my school days who has become in later years an *acquaintance* only; a falling away, due entirely to the abnormal development of his artistic temperament, which will not allow him to see any good in anything or anybody that does not come up to his ideal, the artistic temperament in *his* case taking the form of a kind of mental yellow jaundice! Of course, I consider that I myself possess this temperament, and am willing to admit that the natural friction caused

by the meeting with a less highly developed temperament (?) than his own may have led to the feeling of mental and artistic superiority which has convinced *one* of us that association with the *other* is undesirable! I fancy that the two classes most strongly influenced by this temperament are the painters and the actors, who display characteristics of remarkable resemblance, as, for instance, all painters (I use the word "painters" because "artists" is applied equally to both classes) are fully alive to the beauties of Nature in all her varied moods, but, when those beauties are depicted on the canvasses of *others*, are somewhat prone to discover a comprehension of those beauties inferior to their own! So, too, with actors, the majority of whom possess the feeling, though they may not always express it, that, although Mr. Garrick Siddons's efforts were distinctly *good*, there *are* people, not a hundred miles off, who *might* have shone to more advantage in the part! There is no doubt that the artistic temperament magnifies all the pleasures of one's life by the infusion of a keener zest for enjoyment, the natural outcome of such temperament, but the reverse of the medal is equally well cut, and the misfortunes and disappointments of life are the more keenly felt in consequence of the possession of this temperament! Whether the balance is equally maintained or not is a question only to be answered by the individual, but I incline to the belief that life is smoother to the phlegmatic than the artistic temperament!—though I should not believe it would be possible to find any person possessing the latter who would be willing to renounce it, in spite of its disadvantages, so I must perforce conclude it to be a blessing! *Q.E.D.*

* * * *

Miss Helen Mathers looks upon it as a curse.

If the artistic temperament will enable a man to be rendered profoundly happy by one of those trifles that Nature strews each day in our path—say a salmon-pink sunset seen through the lacing of tall black boles of leafless trees, or a flower, happed upon unexpectedly, that reads you a half-forgotten lesson in "country art"—that same man will be reduced to abject misery and real suffering by a dirty tablecloth, a vulgar, uncongenial companion, or even the presence of a bright blue gown in a chamber subdued to utmost harmonies in gold and yellow. The curse with him follows all too swiftly on the blessing of enjoyment—and lasts longer. And in matters of love, the artistic temperament is a doubtful blessing. The shape of a man's nose will turn a

woman's eyes away from the goodness of his character, and a badly-fitting coat so outrage her beauty-loving propensities, that she is provoked into mistaking her mind's approval for real heart affection, and she chooses the artistic man, only to find, probably, that, like the O'Flaherty, one cannot comfortably worship a lily, without a considerable amount of mutton chops as well—and in the end she may sigh for the tasteless man who yet had the taste to love her.

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We worship the "beautiful" too much.

I think most of us carry this tendency to worship the beautiful too far, and our scorn for the physically unsatisfactory is one of our cruellest and most glaring latter-day faults. It is true we are equally cordially hard on ourselves, and hate our vile bodies, when their aches and pains intrude themselves between us and our soul's delight—for it is from the Pagan, not the Christian, point of view that most lovers of beauty regard life. And if a man's taste require costly gratification of it, say by pictures, by marbles, by the thousand and one sumptuous trifles that go to make the modern house beautiful, then that man is not possessed of true taste, and he will be poorer in his palace than if he dwelt ragged in Nature's lap, with all her riches, and those of his own mind, at his disposal. For the true artistic sense impels one to work always—and always to better and not worsen what it touches. The artistic sense that lazes, and lets other people work to gratify it, is a bastard one, more, it is immoral, and neither bestows, nor receives, grace. It cannot be fashioned, it may not be bought, this strange sense of the inward beauty of things; nor a man's wife, nor his own soul, nor his beautiful house shall teach it him, and he will never be one with the Universe, with God, understanding all indeed, but not by written word or speech, but by what was born in him. And though he may suffer through it too, though to the ugly, the deaf, and the afflicted, such a gift may seem bestowed in cruellest irony, still when all is said and done I can think of no better summary of the whole than that given by Philip Sydney's immortal lines on love. You all know them—

> "He who for love hath undergone
> The worst that can befall
> Is happier thousandfold than he
> Who ne'er hath loved at all . . .
> For in his soul a grace hath reigned
> That nothing else could bring."

Alfred C. Calmour is doubtful.

The artistic temperament is both a blessing and a curse. It is a blessing when it lifts a man's soul out of the slough of vulgar commonplace, and turns his thoughts to the contemplation of noble things, while at the same time it enables him to give something to the world which it would not willingly lose, and for which he can obtain adequate remuneration. But it (the artistic temperament) is a curse when it tempts a man from that honest employment which provides him with bread and butter, and leaves him a defeated, disappointed, and heartbroken wretch, unable to return to that humble course of life which had happily supplied his daily wants.

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Mrs. Panton considers it a fantastic demon.

Personally speaking, I consider the possession of the artistic temperament a distinct curse to those unfortunate folk who have to live with the owner of this fantastic demon; while if the possessor knows how to deal with his old Man of the Sea he has a most powerful engine at his command: for once let the world at large know that the "artistic temperament" has entered into him, his strangest freaks become more than put-up-able with, and the brighter he is in company, and the more irritable and offensive he is at home, the more law is given him, and the less work, and, may I add, decency, is expected of him, until he appears to agree with his compeers or followers, and begins to be as eccentric as he likes. Commencing with long hair touching his shoulders, and with an absence of the use of Someone's soap, he passes on through mystic moonlight glances to a still more artistic appreciation of the charms of Nature at her simplest, until Mrs. Grundy looks askance, and duchesses and other leaders of Society squabble over him, and try one against the other for the honour and pleasure of his society. So far, then, the artistic temperament is for its possessor a fine thing, for it cannot put up with indifferent fare and lodging: it can only prove its existence by the manner in which it annexes all that is richest, most beautiful, and, to use a byegone slang word, most Precious. For it is reserved the luxurious Chesterfield or Divan, heaped with rainbow-like cushions, and placed in the most becoming light, until the quick, unhappy day dawns when another "artistic temperament" comes to the fore, and the first retires perforce, if not a better, certainly a sadder, man, for all that has been happening unto him. Now comes the time when one sees the slow-witted creature sinking

gradually into the mere haunter of the Gaiety bar: when the sacred lamp burns brightly, and causes him to recollect, sadly indeed, the days that are no more. Or we find the man who has learned his bitter lesson, and recognising that *he* still exists—albeit the beast is dead—turns to the work he was meant to do, and does that nobly, though the mad and beautiful days of his youth have done, and all that caused life to be lovely has faded slowly into the *ewigkeit*.

* * * *

If the "artistic temperament" is true and not a sham, to the owner at least it must often be a sheer delight, for the elf or "troll" which goes by this name takes such possession of the owner that under his guidance he sees "What man may never see, the star that travels far." "The light" that the poet declares shone on sea or shore, shines for him always, if for no one else: he walks with Beatrice in Paradise, not in the "other place;" and his delight in the mere rapture of existence is such that he hardly cares to speak for joy, and for the certainty that not one living creature on earth would understand him if he did. For even if he recognised another elf or troll, peeping out of the eyes of a friend, it would not be his own familiar spirit, and, in consequence, he would not understand the other, because no two of these fantastic creatures ever speak entirely alike. But if we mention those who have to exist with the owner of this fantastic Will-o'-the-wisp—for he is as often absent as present—this makes the whole thing a matter of speculation. I feel as if I could not do justice to the idea, for I, too, have lived once on a time with these others; and I would rather not repeat the experiment.

But that, if true, it must often be a delight.

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Punch's illustration of Lord Beaconsfield's announcement that he was "on the side of the angels" casts somewhat of a shadow over the sentiment; yet I feel constrained to quote it, as representing my own feelings in regard to the question whether the artistic temperament is a curse or a blessing. Shakespeare had it; Dickens had it; and Thackeray confessed that he would have been glad to black Shakespeare's boots. One may well be convinced that it is a blessing by the penalties which Heaven exacts from its possessors. It means the capacity to enjoy and appreciate the beautiful; with the great poets and novelists it means the power to express the beautiful and describe it "in

Joseph Hatton declares it to be the choicest gift of all.

thoughts that breathe and words that burn." On the other hand, it means experiencing a keener sense of pain than those are capable of who do not possess tender susceptibilities. But in the spirit of "better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathy" the miseries that belong to the poetic temperament are better than the pleasures that go with its opposite. To feel the full glory of the sun, the joy of the Western wind, to hear the aphonous whisperings of the flowers, to be fancifully cognisant of "the music of the spheres"; better this with only a garret for your environment, than to be a wealthy Peter Bell in a palace, or a lord of many acres who sees nothing beyond its intrinsic value in a Turner, and finds Shelley poor stuff and Tennyson only a rhymster. It is the artistic temperament that lives up to the glories of Nature, and understands the parables; and you need not be a writing poet to have it. There is many a poet who never wrote a line, many a romancist who never contributed to a magazine. The ploughboy whistling behind his team, the gardener lovingly pruning his vines, the angler sitting in the shade of summer trees, even the playgoer craning his neck over the gallery and failing to catch the last words of Hamlet on the stage, may be blessed with something of "the divine afflatus," to be born utterly without which is to require at the Maker's hands a compensation. Thus He gives in a lower form the trick of money-making, the rank of birthright, the cheap distinction of a high place in society; with poverty He joins the peace of humble content, a solid faith in the bliss of a future state, and the rough enjoyment of perfect health. But the poetic temperament is the choicest gift of all; it may have occasional glimpses of the bottomless pit, but it can make its own heaven, and paint its own rainbow upon "the storms of life."

* * * *

Angelina wants to concentrate genius.

The artistic temperament implies genius—and "there's the rub," for we others don't understand genius. The Almighty bestowed the blessing; we have superadded the curse of an ignorant reception. The Genius is the child of his century. *We* persist in relegating him to his family. He asks for materials and room to create. We answer him, "Go to—thou art idle. Put money in thy purse." We bind him with cords of conventionality, and deliver him into the hands of the Philistines. We declare him to be a rational animal who could pay his bills if he chose—and we County Court him if he does not. We build and maintain stately edifices for the accommodation of paupers, criminals, and idiots;

but for the Genius there is not even the smallest parish allowance made to his relatives to pay for a keeper. How *can* he expand under present conditions? "*Es bildet ein Talent sich in der stille*," says Goethe, and I think you will admit that there is precious little of "*der stille*" to be found either in ordinary domestic life, or that refuge of the desperate, a garret in Bloomsbury. Picture to yourself Orpheus executing frenzied violin *obbligati* to the family baby (teething)—or Apollo hastily descending the slopes of Olympus to argue with a tax collector, or irate landlady! Alas! few survive this sort of thing. What I would propose is a Grand National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Genius—including a National Asylum for its reception and maintenance. Geniuses would be fed and clothed, and have their hair cut by the State, who would adopt and cherish them during life, and bequeath them to posterity at death. In this blissful retreat they would be preserved from the chilling influences of the outer world, liberally supplied with foolscap, musical instruments, and padded cells, and protected from all that had hitherto oppressed them—including cats, organ-grinders, creditors, and matrimony. Worshippers of the opposite sex would be allowed to express their appreciation sensibly, by contributions to the box at the door. Just think of the enormous advantage which would be gained by thus concentrating our Genius as we do our other illuminating forces; the saving of brain power by avoiding outside friction. Why there need be absolutely *no* waste! Genius could be "laid on," at a fixed rate, and "lions" supplied by annual subscription.

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Florence Marryat believes it to be a blessing.

Surely—without a manner of doubt—a Blessing—the greatest blessing ever bestowed by Heaven on Man—the best panacea for the troubles of this life—the magic wand that, for the time being, opens the door of a Paradise of our own creation. And in order to procure this enjoyment, it is not necessary that the artist should be successful. Disappointment may be the issue of his attempt, but the attempt itself—the knowledge that he *can* attempt—is so delightful. The work may never reach the artistic ideal—it seldom does—but no artist believes in failure, whilst the child of his brain is germinating. It looks so promising—it grows so fast—the ideas which are to render it immortal press so quickly one upon the other, that he has hardly time to grasp them—whilst his breast heaves and his eye sparkles, and his whole frame quivers

with the sense of power to conceive and to bring to the birth. No fear enters his mind then that his offspring will prove to be stunted, deformed, or weakly. It is his own—no man has begot it before him—and he can take no interest in anything else, until it is completed. Is this not true of the Painter, as he stands with his charcoal in hand thinking out his picture for next year's Academy ?—of the Composer, seated before his piano and running his fingers with apparent want of design over the keys ?—of the Author, as he walks to and fro and plans the details of his new plot ?—of the Poet, as he gazes up into the skies and hears the rhythm of his lines in the "music of the stars ?" True, that the finely-organised and sensitive temperament of the Artist suffers keenly when jarred by the discord of the world—that it amounts almost to a curse to be interrupted when in the throes of a new conception (just thought of and hardly grasped) by someone who has no more notion of what he is undergoing than a deal table would have, and pulls him back roughly from his Paradise to the sordid details of Life, putting all his airy fancies to flight, perhaps, by the process. But neither this materialistic world, nor all the fools that inhabit it, can ever really rob the Artist of the joy—in which "no stranger intermeddleth"—of the Realm of fancy which is his own domain, inherited by right of his genius. Though he may pass through Life unappreciated and unsuccessful, let him still thank God for the Divine power which has been given him—the power to create! It will tide him over the loss of things, which other men cut their throats for—it will stand him in stead of wife and child—in stead of friends and companionship.

* * * *

And that the true artist is never alone.

Is the true Artist ever alone? Do not the creatures of his brain walk beside him wherever he may go? Do they not lie down with him and rise up with him, and even when he is old and grey, his heart still keeps fresh, from association with the Young and Beautiful, with the blossoms of Womanhood and of Spring, that have bloomed upon his canvas—with the notes of the birds and the sounds of falling water that his fingers have conjured to life upon his instrument—with the fair maidens and noble youths that he has accompanied through so many trials and conducted to such a blissful termination in his pages. And beyond all this—beyond the joy of conception and the pride of fruition—there is an added blessing on the artistic temperament. Surely the minds which are always striving after the ideally Perfect must be, in a

measure, refined and purified by the height of the summit they try to reach. "We needs must love the highest, when we see it." It is a Blessing to have the desire to reach the highest, even though we fail, and our natures are raised by the mere contemplation of it. So that the Artist may well forget the rebuffs and cold douches which he receives from those who cannot sympathise with him, and thank Heaven that he can walk out of their world into his own.

* * * *

Zangwill draweth a distinction.

There are two aspects of the artistic temperament —the active or creative side, and the passive or receptive side. It is impossible to possess the power of creation without possessing also the power of appreciation; but it is quite possible to be very susceptible to artistic influences while dowered with little or no faculty of origination. On the one hand is the artist—poet, musician, or painter—on the other, the artistic person to whom the artist appeals. Between the two, in some arts, stands the artistic interpreter—the actor who embodies the aëry conceptions of the poet, the violinist or pianist who makes audible the inspirations of the musician. But in so far as this artistic interpreter rises to greatness in his field, in so far he will be found soaring above the middle ground, away from the artistic person, and into the realm of the artist or creator. Joachim and De Reszke, Paderewski and Irving, put something of themselves into their work; apart from the fact that they could all do (in some cases have done) creative work on their own account. So that when the interpreter is worth considering at all, he may be considered in the creative category. Limiting ourselves then to these two main varieties of the artistic temperament, the active and the passive, I should say that the latter is an unmixed blessing, and the former a mixed curse.

* * * *

He speaketh of ye curse.

What, indeed, can be more delightful than to possess good æsthetic faculties—to be able to enjoy books, music, pictures, plays! This artistic sensibility is the one undoubted advantage of man over other animals, the extra octave in the gamut of life. Most enviable of mankind is the appreciative person, without a scrap of originality, who has every temptation to enjoy, and none to create. He is the idle heir to treasures greater than India's mines can yield; the bee who sucks at every flower, and is not even asked to make

honey. For him poets sing, and painters paint, and composers write. "*O fortunatos nimium*," who not seldom yearn for the fatal gift of genius! For *this* artistic temperament is a curse—a curse that lights on the noblest and best of mankind! From the day of Prometheus to the days of his English laureate it has been a curse

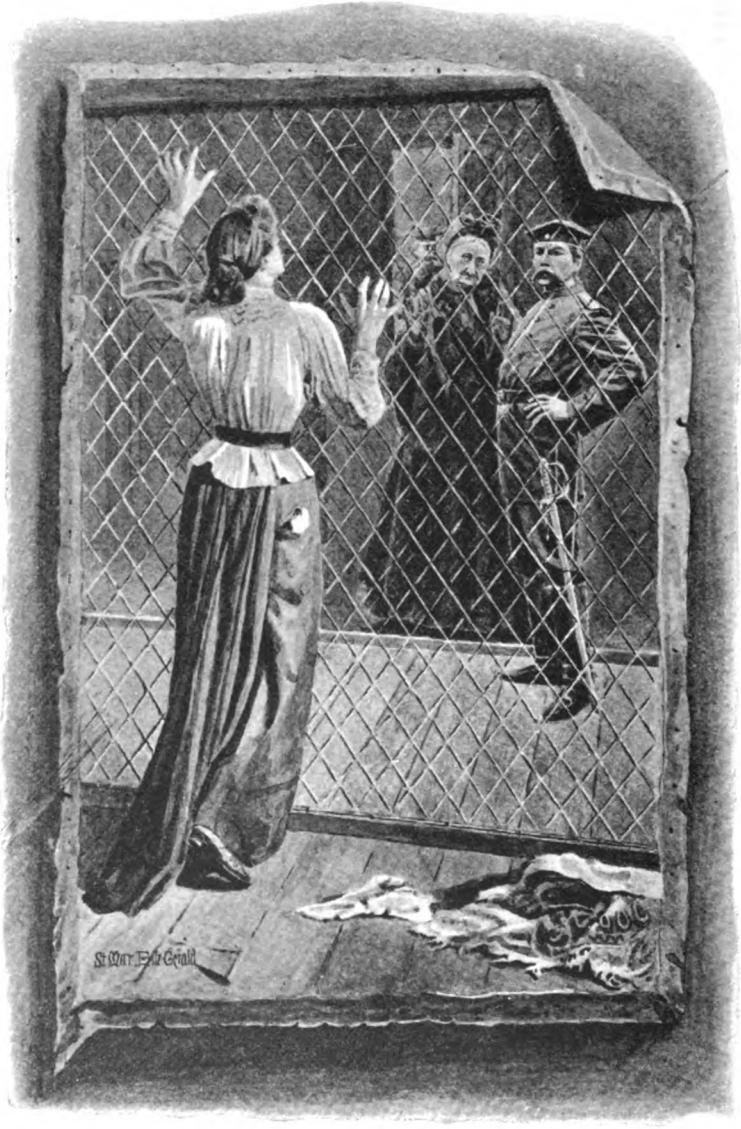
"To vary from the kindly race of men,"

and the eagles have not ceased to peck at the liver of men's benefactors. All great and high art is purchased by suffering—it is not the mechanical product of dexterous craftsmanship. This is one part of the meaning of that mysterious *Master Builder* of Ibsen's. "Then I saw plainly why God had taken my little children from me. It was that I should have nothing else to attach myself to. No such thing as love and happiness, you understand. I was to be only a master builder—nothing else." And the tense strings that give the highest and sweetest notes are most in danger of being overstrung.

* * * *

And its compensations.

But there are compensations. The creative artist is higher in the scale of existence than the man, as the man is higher than the beatified oyster for whose condition, as Aristotle pointed out, few would be tempted to barter the misery of human existence. The animal has consciousness, man self-consciousness, and the artist over-consciousness. Over-consciousness may be a curse, but, like the primitive curse—labour—there are many who would welcome it!



"'No. 16 FOR AN INTERVIEW.'

Memoirs of a Female Nihilist.

By Sophie Wassilieff.

Illustrations by J. St. M. Fitz-Gerald.

II.—IN PRISON.

THE life of a female prisoner! It is so uniformly dull that I fear to weary you, friends, in repeating its history; while for me, even now, outside of some few days only too memorable, the twenty-seven months spent in the fortress are like a great hole, empty and badly lighted, at the bottom of which sometimes passed human shadows and some few phantasmagorical scenes.

In these scattered remembrances, the foremost is my cell and the first moments I passed there.

About ten feet square, its stone walls were covered with white-wash. For furniture, a whitewood stool showing the marks of time and hard wear, a rough deal table, a narrow iron bedstead with thin mattress, a pillow filled with horsehair, and a coarse grey blanket such as is used for covering horses. These details, lighted up for a moment by the candle held by the director of the prison who accompanied me, soon fade away, not into darkness, but into semi-obscurity, for above the door, the dark outlines of which form a contrast with the surrounding whitewashed walls, is a square of glass the width of the door, and behind this burns a small paraffin lamp. By the uncertain light of this lamp, I try to get a more exact idea of my new abode.

High up in the wall opposite the door is a deep and dark hole which I presume to be a window. On the floor, in addition to the slender furniture noticed by the light of the candle, I vaguely distinguish the outlines of my travelling trunk and of a water-jug. The cold humid air gives off a musty odour. Silence reigns, but, as I move, the sound of my footsteps echoes and re-echoes beneath the vaulted roof of the corridor.

All this gives to my cell the aspect of a funeral vault, into which, a few moments ago, I entered full of feverish life and vibrating emotion, and in which I now suddenly find myself buried. From time to time, at intervals of about ten minutes, this cavern is lighted up a little more brightly. There is in the door, at about the height of a man, another window much smaller than that to

which I have already referred, a sort of wicket that I have not before noticed, and which on the outside appears to be protected by a shutter. At intervals, this shutter opens with a metallic noise; a ray of bluish light penetrates into my cell, and behind the wicket appears the head and part of the shoulders of a man. He

THE FACE AT THE WICKET.

wears a moustache, and for several seconds regards me attentively. Accustomed to the stronger gaslight burning in the corridor, he can only vaguely distinguish what is going on in the cell. His eyes, fixed on me at short intervals, vex and trouble me.

Taking advantage of one of these intervals, I rapidly change the clothes I am wearing for others larger and more comfortable, which Aunt Vera has put into my trunk, and then I throw myself upon my narrow bed. A few minutes later, amidst the noise of iron bars and padlocks being removed, my cell door opens, and then a woman appears, and behind her I notice several men wearing blue uniforms braided with silver. The woman, whose features, owing to her back being turned towards the light, I can only vaguely distinguish, appears to be either a servant, or a woman of the people; she alone enters my cell.

This apparition causes a shudder to go through my entire being. I have before now heard of an atrocious and odious proceeding, of a special search, for the carrying out of which the prisoners, gagged and strapped on their beds, or to the iron rings found in the walls of the cells of all political prisons, are reduced to absolute helplessness, while men and women appointed to this work examine their mouths, their hair, their ears, every fold of their garments and of their bodies, in the search for some scrap of paper hidden at the last moment, and on which, perchance, may be found a name or an address.

The sudden remembrance of these examinations (1) exasperates and freezes me with terror. I rise and stand trembling by the side of my bed, with arms outstretched to defend myself, while I follow each of my visitor's movements, and question her, "What does she require? Why has she come?" She neither replies nor turns her head, but gathers up the garments I have taken off, together with the few toilet necessaries I have placed on the table, then turning towards me she extends her right arm. I start back, and my question, "What do you require of me?" becomes almost a scream.

Ah! no—happily, no!—it is only to take the fur mantle that I have used to cover my feet, and that, silently, and with the same noiseless footsteps, my ghostly visitor takes away, together with my other effects.

Are they to be examined, or are they simply taken away in order to be replaced by the prisoner's garb? I know not, and the question is one of perfect indifference to me. But the clang of iron bars and padlocks being replaced on the door, all this noise of

(1) These examinations of the person only take place in cases of exceptional gravity. On the other hand, it is not prisoners alone who have to submit to the ordeal, but all persons suspected of concealing papers, Russian travellers returning from abroad, &c., &c.

iron, which so painfully affected me an hour ago, I now listen to with a sigh of relief.

"TURNING TOWARDS ME, SHE EXTENDS HER RIGHT ARM."

This noise, and possibly my cry, appears to have awakened some of the other prisoners. I hear blows struck on the doors; voices, unknown to me, or rendered unrecognisable by reason of

the thickness of these cursed walls, appear to be crying out and questioning. The questions remain unanswered, but they tell me that I am not alone; that I need only cry for help in order, if need be, to put the entire prison in a state of revolt. This idea soothes my nerves, and I lie close against the humid wall, behind which I feel there is an unknown but blessed protection, and with my face pressed into the hard horsehair pillow, I give vent to my first prisoner's tears; tears of agony and impotent revolt, tears of farewell to life.

By daylight the appearance of my cell is not improved. The narrow door made from rough oak is crossed on the inside with iron bars, while those on the outside, together with the locks and padlocks, render it almost as solid as the walls. As to the latter, white at night, they appear in the day, thanks to the moisture with which they are covered, a bluish grey. The window, placed high in a niche of the wall, is about twenty inches square, and is protected on the inner side by a grating. It is double, composed of eight small panes, those on the inner side being of fluted ground-glass, so that it is impossible to see what is going on outside. As the window is never opened, the dust has accumulated, and the light that now filters through is dull and grey. Grey are the stone blocks of which the floor is composed; grey the oak door, the furniture, and the walls; grey the narrow bed, with coarse grey covering, and all this grey, of which afterwards I learned to distinguish the shades, constitutes a cloud which presses and weighs upon the prisoner. Later on, in the Swiss mountains, it sometimes happened that I was enveloped in a cloud which, intercepting light and sound, cut me off from the rest of the world. A sojourn in one of these clouds gives to the surprised traveller, by reason of its rarity, a series of curious impressions. But twenty-seven months in a cloud is a long time! A very long time! Three times each day, with a noise of falling iron, the door of my cell opened, and on the threshold appeared two men in blue uniforms braided with silver, and armed with swords and revolvers. A third, dressed as an orderly, entered my cell carrying a tray, on which, morning and evening, was placed a glass, a teapot, sugar, and bread—at noon, a bowl of soup, and a plate containing the daily ration of meat and vegetables, all cut in small pieces. In the morning the orderly swept out my cell, filled my water-jug, and, if so desired, opened a movable pane at the top of the window, which when closed was secured by a catch.

These three silent and regular visits were the sole events of

the day. Outside of these—an absolute void, a heavy silence, broken from time to time by the clang of a sword-scabbard on the pavement or the jingle of a spur, instantly suppressed.

This silence, this void, I feel but in a slight degree during the first days after my arrest—that is to say, physically. Morally, however, although separated from the world by these thick walls, I am still too near to it. At every hour of the day I can picture to myself what is taking place at home and amongst my friends, and I live their life. The desire to know if the others have been arrested, and under what circumstances, mingles with the anxiety which preoccupies me. I await with impatience the first interrogatory examination, for the questions then asked are for the political prisoner the only indications obtainable from which he can form an idea of why he has been arrested, what are the charges against him, and what fate he may expect!

TELEGRAPHIC SIGNALS.

I am very weary because of sleepless nights, partly due to being obliged to lie down in my clothes, and also because of excitement, which tends to keep me awake. My days I spend in alternately feverishly promenading my cell and lying on my bed in a state which is neither sleeping nor waking. Gradually I learn to correspond with my neighbours by means of telegraphic signals. Ah! those signals! How carefully should they be studied by all those whose fate it may one day be to be confined in a political prison, and who in Russia is not liable to such a fate? I know the signals theoretically—that is to say, I know how the alphabet is produced. But from theory to practice is a long stride, and to what movements of impatience have I given way, how desperately in my unnerved state have I struggled in order to learn the meaning of the light blows struck against the walls, and to understand the precious words that were addressed to me.

After a fortnight of such days, each of which, taken by itself, seemed more empty and slower than the previous one, but which, taken as a whole, appeared, by reason of their absolute uniformity, to have passed like a dream, I am at last summoned to the cabinet of the director of the prison, in order to be interrogated. The cabinet is at the other end of the corridor, and only separated from the latter by an antechamber, the doors and windows of which are barred and grilled in the same manner as the cells. Notwithstanding this, and although the distance is so short, an escort, composed of an officer of constabulary, two subalterns, and a private, await me outside my cell, armed with revolvers in their belts and sword-bayonets in their hands. This display of force for a woman prisoner, who is little more than a child, causes me to smile.

Arrived at the Director's cabinet, a large whitewashed room, in the centre of which is a table covered by a green cloth, and on which are papers, I find myself in the presence of three gentlemen. The first of these is a short, fat man, with bald pointed head, sharp, crafty grey eyes, and he reminds me of one of the rats with which the prison abounds, but it is a rat in uniform. This is the director of the prison, Capt. W——. The second is Col. P——, who, a fortnight ago, arrested me. He is still young, tall, broad-shouldered, and his constabulary uniform seems almost too tight for him. His face, square and massive, is pitted with smallpox, his moustache small and fair, and his eyes sharp and ferret-like. The third, who is in mufti, is Mr. N——, the procurer to the Chamber of Judgments (2). Tall, stout, with an insignificant face, brown eyes, and a brown beard shaved on the chin, he is still a young man. In the town of X——, where he is a stranger, he enjoys a reputation for ability and intelligence in conducting examinations. I know him by sight, and his presence gives me cause for inquietude, for, as a rule, in ordinary cases he is satisfied to leave their conduct to one of his substitutes. I cannot help noticing the air of wellbeing and repose which characterises these gentlemen, as compared with my nervous and fatigued state, and the comparison puts me on my guard.

I mistrust the half-closed eyes, apparently tired and sleepy, with

(2) Court of Justice which, if necessary, revises the judgments of the other courts, and deals with cases of exceptional gravity. Doubting the best judges - since the acquittal of Vera Vassoulitch—the Government no longer confides political cases to civil courts, but hands them over either to martial courts, or the Chamber of Judgments. This latter court has no examining judge, that function being undertaken by the procurer.

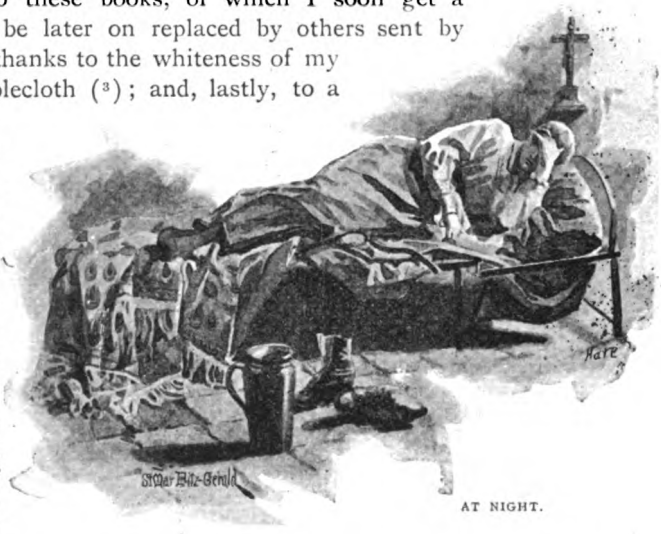
which Mr. N—— examines me, and I also mistrust my outspoken nature and the ease with which I am carried away, characteristics which Serge and Aunt Vera have so often tried to repress. On the table is the parcel of books found at my home at the time of my arrest. Where they come from remains an enigma which I fear to touch, because its solution may compromise some of my relatives and friends. Therefore, after I have replied to sundry questions concerning my social status, I refuse to answer any other. My refusal provokes much dissatisfaction, especially on the part of Colonel P——, who resorts to heroic measures, promising, if I speak, to immediately set me at liberty, but threatening, if I refuse, a long imprisonment and, possibly, hard labour. After half-an-hour devoted to a discussion, in which Mr. N—— takes only a very small part, I am escorted to my cell, and informed that I have a week in which to reflect. Tired out, nervously excited, I have learnt nothing as to my probable fate. On the other hand, the large sheet of white paper, which was intended for my confession, only bears my name, age, address, and the statement that, *as to my political opinions*, I am a revolutionary socialist, and this document I have signed.

COLONEL P——.

The scene in the Director's cabinet is renewed two or three times. I take advantage of these examinations to ask for books and the removal of the "blue angel," whose almost continual presence at the wicket of my door is intended to keep me from communicating with my neighbours, to render my life more miserable, to force me to confess, and to make it a matter of impossibility for me to change my garments, or enjoy any repose. Aunt Vera, to whom, according to prison regulations, I am allowed to write once a month, works towards the same end. At last, one fine day, Capt. W—— comes to my cell and informs me that, morning or evening, when I desire it, I can dismiss the sentry for half-an-hour. Two men who follow Capt. W—— bring in my large travelling trunk, in which, among other things, I find part of my boarding

school trousseau, including bedding and the numbered knife, fork, and spoon. At the same time, I obtain permission to take books from the prison library. These consist principally of various editions of the Gospels, and the dull "lives" of saints who never troubled themselves about earthly affairs.

Thanks to these books, of which I soon get a selection, to be later on replaced by others sent by Aunt Vera; thanks to the whiteness of my quilt and tablecloth (3); and, lastly, to a few toilet objects found in my trunk, and an alarm clock, which I still possess, my cell appears less repulsive than heretofore. And when at night, dressed in one of those long white flannel dressing-gowns, which Aunt Vera has made especially for me, I stretch myself in my bed, I am happy as one rarely is between those walls covered with the dew of prisoners' tears, and dream of immense steppes, the blue sea, and a vast expanse free and flooded in sunlight.



AT NIGHT.

II.

This period, so poor in events, is for me most memorable, for it is the commencement of my monotonous life as a prisoner. I spend the greater portion of my time reading. Pen, ink, and paper are forbidden to political prisoners, as are also newspapers, reviews, and other works dealing with current events. Even the books allowed, although they have already been passed by the Public Censor, are again examined by Colonel P——, who rigorously eliminates every line even distantly hinting at politics or social life, or which may appear to him "subversive." Thanks to this system, I for some time read nothing but scientific and philosophic

(3) The regulations admit only articles in white, black, or grey.

works, for which classes of reading I am too young and but ill-prepared. Gradually, however, these works take hold upon me; they appeal to my pride, and I struggle to vanquish the difficulties of understanding these vast systems which rule the world, of which I know so little. They cause me to reflect, and appeal to my imagination. Outside of these works, I write Aunt Vera to send me those of different poets and celebrated novelists, and to send them as much as possible in chronological order, so that I may improve my knowledge of literature. This simple desire is in opposition to Colonel P——'s system. Fortunately, he does not know foreign languages, and such books are sent for approval to Mr. N——, who, more intelligent than his colleague, does not need to read a book through to grasp its motive, and so he signs most of what is presented to him, and then they are sent to me. Reading, with short intervals for needlework or embroidery, constitutes my daily life, excepting for the interruptions for meals and the daily walk in the narrow prison yard. There is very little to attract in this solitary walk in a small paved court-yard, surrounded by high walls, and with a soldier or policeman at each corner. The walk is soon over, however, for only one prisoner is allowed there at one time, and there are many prisoners, and the winter days are short. The most peaceable time is the twilight hour. Then the feeble light reflected from the snow and filtered through the frost-covered panes of my window rapidly declines. Then I am forced to drop work or reading, and I abandon myself to the current of my sad thoughts. I feel tired and discouraged. The slow course of a political trial of which the preliminary examinations often extend over several years; the absolute and arbitrary character of the proceedings, the ready-made verdict sent from St. Petersburg; the prisoner's ignorance of the offence of which he is accused, and of which he seldom obtains details until the trial is ended; the disastrous influence which prison life exercises, even on the strongest, all tend to prove that, once in prison, one can never be certain of regaining liberty. This idea, which the anxiety and the fatigue of the first few days chases away, returns later on with renewed force. Then another, not less painful and more important, creeps into the brain, namely, the absolute inutility of all that one can do or learn. At such times, in the semi-obscurity of my cell, when the wind is shaking my window as though it would tear it from its stone casing, I, who am only eighteen or nineteen years of age, ask myself, with infinite agony of soul, of what use are these books, of what use

is life, if it is only to be a longer or shorter suffering, without the opportunity of being useful for something or to somebody?

To escape from these thoughts, I often pass the twilight hour at my window. The prison regulations forbid it, but prisoners pay little attention to this or any other rule, and our keepers, soldiers, officers, or Captain W—— passing by, and noticing a prisoner at the window, simply shrug their shoulders as who would say, "What can they see?" And after all they are right, for there is little to be seen. Above, a small patch of sky; below, under the window, a sentry pacing up and down; farther on, the wall surrounding the prison; beyond that, the outside wall surrounding the fortress; and lastly, a plain, through which a river takes its course. At times on this plain I notice moving figures. Sometimes, too, the evening breeze brings to my ears the sound of laughter, a call, or a soldier's song. These indications of life in the distance are so feeble that in reality they amount to very little. And yet, in order to catch them on the wing, I sometimes pass hours at the little open square in my window, in spite of the cold and the snow and rain beating upon my face.

IN THE PRISON YARD.

But now it is night. Tea is served, together with cold meat, purchased with money deposited at the prison office by prisoners

or their friends. The little lamp above the door is lighted, the cell is locked, and the key handed over to the prison director. This regulation is not without its dangers (4), but I am thankful to know that, although I cannot go out, nor even receive the friends I so much desire to see, still there is no fear of a sudden visit from Colonel P—— or his soldiers; nor of one of those examinations that sometimes take place in the cells. I also like the lamplight at night. Too dim to read or work by, it enlarges and transforms my little cell, so sad and grey by daylight, and in filling it with a golden mist produces an illusion of warmth and life. Besides, the evening is the time for telegraphic communications with neighbours, conversations which, thanks to the impossibility of the "blue angel's" interruption, are often prolonged far into the night. This is also the hour for memories and dreams. Tired of counting the rapid and hardly perceptible blows, and putting together the letters and words composing the sentences they convey, I stretch myself upon my bed; I gaze into the dim and golden mist, and gradually people it with life and movement. Again I see our immense plains, the towns, the country with its innumerable natural riches, and the suffering and misery which our *régime* imposes upon the inhabitants, and the view of which agonises my heart. The scene is gradually peopled with known and loved faces, amongst which those of Serge and Aunt Vera oftenest appear. Sometimes the figures appear one after the other, then in groups, bringing back details of their life and of mine. These figures appearing before me stand out in such strong relief, they are so truly alive, that I sometimes forget my past and try to read the future of those for whom it exists—and for others I build castles in Spain. Often, too, joining my desires to all that my intelligence and imagination can create that is beautiful, I indulge in Utopias, and before my eyes, enlarged by the feverish dream, pass immense crowds, free, good, beautiful and happy, crowds grand as humanity.

The noise of footsteps, or the closing of a door, a groan or a cry, sometimes disperse these memories and dreams; for in the prison no doors open at night save to commit fresh prisoners, and no cries are heard save cries for help. Uneasy, I rise, as others did the night I was brought here, and listen. If the noise or the

(4) In 1877, or '78, an Odessa prisoner, named Solomine, in an access of melancholia, tied himself on his bed and then set fire to the bedding. The smoke issuing through the door cracks warned the keepers, but the key had been handed to the director, and he was in town. When the door was at last forced open there only remained the ashes of the bedding and a partly carbonised corpse.

groan is prolonged, if the cry is repeated, I and others knock on the wicket of our doors in order to call the attention of the "blue angel." As he is not allowed to speak to the prisoners, he generally indicates by dumb motions that all is well and that one may sleep in peace. But as he opens the wicket we obtain a glimpse of part of the corridor, and that often enables us to judge of what is taking place. Besides, these signals are intended to convey to

"GHOSTS"

the new arrival, or the comrade taken ill, that he is not alone, and that we are watching. Generally this suffices, but if not, then one or more of the prisoners takes up some hard object, such as a bottle or stool, and commences to knock on the door. In an instant the prison is alarmed, the prisoners, suddenly awakened, call for an explanation, often difficult to furnish, and in turn seize their stools and strike. The din produced by these blows, struck simultaneously, is enormous, and I know and can imagine nothing more

frightfully lugubrious than to be suddenly awakened by this awful noise, and to find oneself in a cold cell from which there is no issue.

This method, one of the few employed by prisoners for the purpose of imposing their collective will, is only resorted to in exceptional cases, as, for instance, when it is necessary to force the warders and the director to attend to a sick comrade, or to summon the doctor at an unusual hour.

Outside of these events, outside of memories and dreams, my prison life has also its joys. These consist in the letters I receive from Serge and Aunt Vera. The former are full of a forced gaiety, short and commonplace, for the prison regulations forbid prisoners to write on other subjects save their health, clothes, and books, and they are all read by a constabulary officer, who acts as censor.

Aunt Vera's letters are long, and she tries to encourage me by a recital of the efforts she is making in order to obtain an interview with me, and each of her dear letters ends with "until we meet." But that "until" is long, and lasts eight months. At last, one day, at the commencement of summer, I hear a male voice in the corridor cry, "No. 16 for an interview." My heart throbs as though it would burst, and as soon as my door is opened I rush into the corridor, and then into the antechamber. I push the door pointed out by the warder, who enters with me, and instead of finding myself in Aunt Vera's arms, rush against a wire screen, light but strong, and closely woven. This network is high, and stretched entirely across the room. A few steps beyond is a similar screen, and between, as in a cage, is a constabulary officer with red, bloated face, who, with hands behind his back, walks slowly up and down.

This officer, these nets, this drunkard's face, blot out at intervals the gentle form of Aunt Vera, who, on the other side of the cage, is doing her utmost to smile at me through her tears. Later on I get accustomed to all this, but at this first interview, so much desired, so long waited for, I feel choking with rage and despair. I do not know how to reply to Aunt Vera's enquiries, and, when I do, my voice is so strange that it causes her to murmur in despair—"My God, how you are changed, my little one!"

Changed! It is possible! The prison so crushes its victims that it is no wonder they change, especially when they are young and stay there a long time. Of the changes in myself I am aware only much later. In waiting, my slow, dull life is passed in a cloud, which covers and presses upon the prisoner until the day when the lightning flash and the tempest rends the clouds and brings down showers of tears and blood.

(To be continued.)

The Legs of Sister Ursula.

By Rudyard Kipling.

Illustrations by Hal Hurst.

THE one man of all men who could have told this tale and lived has long since gone to his place; and there is no apology for those that would follow in the footsteps of Lawrence Sterne.

In a nameless city of a land that shall be nameless, a rich man lived alone. His wealth had bought him a luxurious flat on the fifth floor of a red-brick mansion, whose grilles were of hammered iron, and whose halls were of inlaid marble. When he needed attendance, coals, his letters, a meal, a messenger or a carriage, he pressed an electric button and his wants were satisfied almost as swiftly as even petulant wealth could expect. An exceedingly swift lift bore him to and from his rooms, and in his rooms he had gathered about him all that his eye desired—books in rich cases with felted hinges, ivories from all the world, rugs, lamps, cushions, couches, engravings and rings with engravings upon them, miniatures of pretty women, scientific toys and china from Persia. He had friends and acquaintances as many as he could befriend or know; and some said that more than one woman had given him her whole love. Therefore, he could have lacked nothing whatever.

One day a hot sickness touched him with its finger, and he became no more than a sick man alone among his possessions, the sport of dreams and devils and shadows, sometimes a log and sometimes a lunatic crying in delirium. Before his friends forsook him altogether, as healthy brutes will forsake the wounded, they saw that he was efficiently doctored, and the expensive physician who called upon him at first three times a day, and later only once, caused him to be nursed by a nun. "Science is good," said the physician, "but for steady, continuous nursing, with no science in it, Religion is better—and I know Sister Ursula."

So this sick man was nursed by a nun, young and fairly pretty, but, above all, skilful. When he got better he would give the convent, and not Sister Ursula, a thankoffering which would be spent among the poor whom Sister Ursula chiefly attended. At first the man knew nothing of the nun's existence—he was in the country beyond all creeds—but later a white coifed face came and went across his visions, and at last, spent and broken, he woke to

see a very quiet young woman in black moving about his room. He was too weak to speak: too weak almost to cling to life any more. In his despair he thought that it was not worth clinging to; but the woman was at least a woman and alive. The touch of her fingers in his as she gave him the medicine was warm. She testified to the existence of a world full of women also alive—the

"A HOT SICKNESS TOUCHED HIM WITH ITS FINGER."

world he was beginning to disbelieve in. He watched her sitting in the sunshine by the window, and counted the light creeping down from bead to bead of the rosary at her waist. They then moved his bed to the window that he might look down upon the stately avenue that ran by the flat-house, and watch the people going to and fro about their business. But the change, instead of

cheering, cast him into a deeper melancholy. It was nearly a hundred feet, sheer drop, to those healthy people walking so fast, and the mere distance depressed him unutterably. He played with the scores of visiting-cards that his friends had left for him, and he tried to play with the knobs of the desk close to the head of his bed, and he was very, very wretched.

One morning he turned his face away from the sunlight and took no interest in anything, while the hand turned back upon the dial so swiftly that it almost alarmed the doctor. He said to himself: "Bored, eh? Yes. You're just the kind of over-educated, over-refined man that would drop his hold on life through sheer boredom. You've been a most interesting case so far, and I won't lose you." He said to Sister Ursula that he would send an entirely fresh prescription by his boy, and that Sister Ursula must give it to the invalid every twenty minutes without fail. Also, if the man responded, it might be well to talk to him a little. "He needs cheering up. There is nothing the matter with him now; but he won't pick up."

"SISTER URSULA."

There can be few points of sympathy between a man born, bred, trained, and sold for and to the world and a good nun made for the service of other things. Sister Ursula's voice was very sweet, but the matter of her speech did not interest. The invalid lay still, looking out of the window upon the street all dressed in its Sunday afternoon emptiness. Then he shut his eyes. The doctor's boy rang at the door. Sister Ursula stepped out into the hall, not to disturb the sleeper, and took the medicine from the boy's hand. Then the lift shot down again, and even as she turned the wind of its descent puffed up and blew to the spring-lock door of the rooms with a click only a little more loud than the leap of her terrified heart.

Sister Ursula tried the door softly, but rich men with many hundred pounds worth of *bric-à-brac* buy themselves very well made doors that fasten with singularly cunning locks. Then the

lift returned with the boy in charge, and, so soon as his Sunday and rather distracted attention was drawn to the state of affairs, he suggested that Sister Ursula should go down to the basement and speak to the caretaker, who doubtless had a duplicate key. To the basement, therefore, Sister Ursula went with the medicine-bottle clasped to her breast, and there, among mops and brooms and sinks and heating pipes, and the termini of all the electric communications of that many-storied warren, she found, not the caretaker, but his wife, reading a paper, with her feet on a box of soap. The caretaker's wife was Irish, and a Catholic, reverencing the Church in all its manifestations. She was not only sympathetic, but polite. Her husband had gone out, and, being a prudent guardian of the interests confided to him, had locked up all the duplicate keys.

"READING A PAPER, WITH HER FEET ON A BOX OF SOAP."

"An' the saints only know whin Mike'll be back av a Sunday," she concluded cheerfully, after a history of Mike's peculiarities. "He'll be afther havin' supper wid friends."

"The medicine!" said Sister Ursula, looking at the inscription on the bottle. "It must begin at twenty minutes past five. There are only ten minutes now. There *must*—oh! there must be a way!"

"Give him a double dose next time. The docthor won't know the differ." The convent of Sister Ursula is not modelled after Irish ideals, and the present duty before its nun was to return to the locked room with the medicine. Meantime the minutes flew bridleless, and Sister Ursula's eyes were full of tears.

"I must get to the room," she insisted. "Oh, surely, there is a way, any way!"

"There's wan way," said the caretaker's wife, stung to profitable thought by the other's distress. "And that's the way the tenants would go in case av fire. To be sure now I might send the lift boy."

"It would frighten him to death. He must not see strangers. What is the way?"

"If we wint into the cellar an' out into the area, we'll find the ground ends av the fire-eshcapes that take to all the rooms. Go aisy, dear."

Sister Ursula had gone down the basement steps through the cellar into the area, and with clenched teeth was looking up the monstrous sheer of red-brick wall cut into long strips by the lessening perspective of perpendicular iron ladders. Under each window each ladder opened out into a little, a very little, balcony. The rest was straighter than a ship's mast.

The caretaker's wife followed, panting; came out into the sunshine, and, shading her eyes, took stock of the ground.

"He'll be No. 42 on the Fifth. Thin this ladder goes up to it. Bad luck to thim, they've the eshcapes front an' back, spoilin' the look av a fine house: but it's all paid for in the rint. Glory be to God, the avenue's empty—all but. But it should ha' been the back—it should ha' been the back!"

Two children were playing in the gutter. But for these the avenue was deserted, and the hush of a Sabbath afternoon hung over it all. Sister Ursula put the medicine-bottle carefully into the pocket of her gown. Her face was as white as her coif.

"'Tis not for me," said the caretaker's wife, shaking her head sadly. "I'm so's to be round, or I'd go wid ye. Those ladders do be runnin' powerful straight up an' down. 'Tis scandalous to think—but in a fire, an' runnin' wid their night clothes, they'd not stop to think. Go away, ye two little imps, there! The bottle's in your pocket? You'll not lose good hold av the irons. What is ut?—oh!"

Sister Ursula retreated into the cellar, dropped on her knees, and was praying—praying as Lady Godiva prayed before she mounted her palfrey. The caretaker's wife had barely time to cross herself, and follow her example, when she was on her feet again, and her feet were on the lowest rungs of the ladder.

"Hould tight," said the caretaker's wife. "Oh, darlint, wait till Mike comes! Come down, now!—the good angels be wid you. There should have been a way at the back. Walk tinderly an' hould tight. Heaven above sind there'll be no wind! Oh,

why wasn't his ugly rooms at the back, where 'tis only yards an' bedroom windows!"

The voice grew fainter and stopped. Sister Ursula was at the level of the first floor windows when the two children caught sight of her, raising together a shrill shout. The devil that delights in torturing good nuns inspired them next to separate and run the one up and the other down the avenue, yelling, "O—oh! There's a nun up the fire-escape! A nun on the fire-escape!" and, since one word at least was familiar, a score of heads came to windows in the avenue, and were much interested.

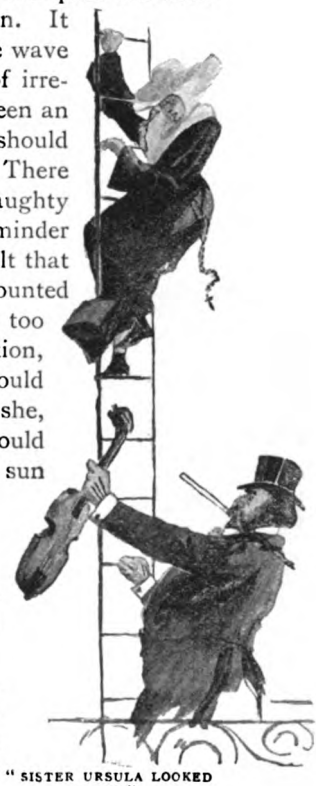
In spite of her prayers, Sister Ursula was not happy. The medicine-bottle banged and bumped in her pocket as she gripped the iron bars hand over hand and toiled aloft. "It is for the sake of a life," she panted to herself. "It is a good work. He might die if I did not come. Ah! it is terrible." A flake of rust from the long disused irons had fallen on her nose. The rungs were chafing her hands, and the minutes were flying. The round, red face of the caretaker's wife grew smaller and smaller below her, and there was a rumbling of wheels in the avenue. An idle coachman, drawn by the shouts of the children, had turned the corner to see what was to be seen. And Sister Ursula climbed in agony of spirit, the heelless black cloth shoes that nuns wear slipping on the rungs of the ladder, and all earth reeling a hundred thousand feet below.

She passed one set of apartments, and they were empty of people, but the fire, the books on the table, and the child's toy cast on the hearthrug showed it was deserted only for a minute. Sister Ursula drew breath on the balcony, and then hurried upwards. There was iron rust red on both her hands, the front of her gown was speckled with it, and a reflection in the stately double window showed a stainless stiff fold of her head-gear battered down over her eye. Her shoe, yes, the mended one, had burst at the side near the toe in a generous bulge of white stocking. She climbed on wearily, for the bottle was swinging again, and in her ears there came unbidden the nursery refrain that she used to sing to the little sick children in the hospital at Quebec:

"This is the cow with the crumpled horn."

Between earth and heaven, it is said, the soul on its upward journey must pass the buffeting of many evil spirits. There flashed into Sister Ursula's mind the remembrance of a picture of a man gazing from the leads down the side of

a house—a wonderful piece of foreshortening that made one dizzy to see. Where had she seen that picture? Memory, that works indifferently on earth or in vacuo, told her of a book read by stealth in her novitiate, such a book as perils body and soul, and Sister Ursula blushed redder than the brickwork a foot before her nose. Everything that she had read in or thought about that book raced through her mind as all his past life does not race through the soul of a drowning man. It was horrible, most horrible. Then rose a fierce wave of rage and indignation that she, a sister of irreproachable life and demeanour (the book had been an indiscretion, long since bitterly repented of), should be singled out for these humiliating exercises. There were other nuns of her acquaintance, proud, haughty and overbearing (her foot slipped here as a reminder against the sin of hasty judgments, and she felt that it was a small and niggling Justice that counted offences at such a crisis), and—and thinking too much of their holiness, to whom this mortification, with all the rust flakes in bosom and kerchief, would have been salutary and wholesome. But that she, Sister Ursula, who only desired a quiet life, should climb fire-escapes in the face of the shameless sun and a watching population! It was too terrible. None the less she did not come down.



"SISTER URSULA LOOKED DOWN."

Praying to be delivered from evil thoughts, praying that the swinging bottle would not smash itself against the iron ladders, she toiled on. The second and third flats were empty, and she heard a murmur in the street; a hum of encouraging tumult, cheerful outcries bidding her go up higher, and crisp enquiries as to whether this were the end of the performance. Her Saint—she that had not prevailed against the Nuns—would not help Sister Ursula, and it came over her, as cold water slides down the spine, that at her journey's end she would have to—go—through—the window. There is no vestibule, portico, or robing-room at the upper end of a fire-escape. It is designed for such as move in a hurry, unstudious of the graces, being for the most part not over-dressed, and yet seeking publicity—that publicity which came to Sister Ursula unsought. She must go

through that window in order to give her invalid his medicine. Her head must go first, and her feet, and the bursten shoe, must go last. It was the very breaking point in the strain, and here her saint, mistaking the needs of the case, sent her a companion. Her head was level with the window of the fourth story, and she was rejoicing to find that that also was empty when the door opened, and there entered a man something elderly, of prominent figure, and dressed according to the most rigid canons laid down for afternoon visits. He was millions of leagues removed from Sister Ursula's world—this person with the tall silk hat, the long frock-coat, the light grey trousers, the tiny yellow button-hole rose, and the marvellous puffed cravat anchored about with black pearl-headed pins—but an imperative need for justification was upon her. Her own mission, the absolute rightness of her own mission, were so clear to herself that she never doubted anyone might misunderstand when she pointed upwards to the skies, and the flat above.

"SANK PANTING AT THE FOOT OF THE BED."

The man, who was in the act of laying his tall hat absently upon the table, looked up as the shadow took the light, saw the gesture, and stared. Then his jaw dropped, and his face became ashy-grey. Sister Ursula had never seen Terror in the flesh, well-dressed and fresh from a round of calls. She gathered herself up to climb on, but the man within uttered a cry that even the double windows could not altogether stifle, and ran round the room in circles as a dog runs seeking a lost glove.

"He is mad," thought Sister Ursula. "Oh, heavens, and *that* is what has driven him mad."

He was stooping fondly over something that seemed like the coffin of a little child. Then he rushed directly at the window open-mouthed. Sister Ursula went upwards and onwards, none the

less swiftly because she heard a muffled oath, the crash of broken glass, and the tinkling of the broken splinters on the pavestones below. For the second time only in her career, she looked down—down between the ladder and the wall. A silk hat was bobbing wildly, as a fishing-float on a troubled stream, not a dozen rungs beneath, and a voice—the voice of fear—cried hoarsely, "Where is it? Where is it?" Then went up to the roofs the roaring and the laughter of a great crowd; yells, cat-calls, ki-yis and hootings many times multiplied. Her Saint had heard her at last, and caused Sister Ursula to disregard the pains of going through the window. Her one desire now was to reach that haven, to jump, dive, leap-frog through it if necessary, and shut out the unfortunate maniac. It was a short race, but swift, and Saint Ursula took care of the bottle. A long course of afternoon calls, with refreshments at clubs in the intervals, is not such good training as the care of the sick in all weathers for sprinting over a course laid at ninety degrees. Nor again can the best of athletes go swiftly up a ladder if he carries a priceless violin in one hand and its equally priceless bow in his teeth, and handicaps himself with varnished leather buttoned boots. They climbed, the one below the other.

"'OPEN THE WINDOW!' ROARED COTT."

The window at the foot of the invalid's bed was open. At the next window was the white face of the invalid. Sister Ursula reached the sash, threw it up, went through—let no man ask how—shut it gently but with amazing quickness, and sank panting at the foot of the bed, one hand on the bottle.

"There was no other way," she panted. "The door was locked. I could not help. Oh! He is here!"

The face of Terror in the top hat rose to the window-level inch by inch. The violin-bow was between his teeth, and his hat hung over one eye in the fashion of early dawn.

"It's Cott van Cott," said the invalid, slowly and critically. "He looks quite an old man. Cott and his Strad. How very bad for the Strad!"

"Open the window. Where is it? Is there a way? Open the window!" roared Cott, without removing the violin-bow.

Sister Ursula held up one hand warningly as she stooped over the invalid.

For the second time did Cott van Cott misinterpret the gesture and heaved himself upward, the violin and the bow clicking and rattling at every stride. He was fleeing to the leads to save his life and his violin from death by fire—fire in the basement—and the crowd in the street roared below him with the roar of a full-fed conflagration.

"TOOK ONE LITTLE BRASS THIMBLE-LIKE THING FROM ITS INSIDE."

The invalid fell back on the pillows and wiped his eyes. The hands of the clock were on the hour appointed for the medicine, lacking only the thirty seconds necessary for pouring it into a wine-glass. He took it from Sister Ursula's hand, still shaking with helpless laughter.

"God bless you, Sister Ursula," he said. "You've saved my life."

"The medicine was to be given," she answered simply. "I—I could not help coming that way."

"If you only knew," said the invalid. "If you only knew! I saw it from out of the windows. Good heavens! the dear old world is just the same as ever. I must get back to it. I must positively get well and get back. And, Sister Ursula, do you mind telling me when you're quite composed everything that happened between the time the door shut and—and you came in that way?"

After a little Sister Ursula told, and the invalid laughed himself faint once more. When Sister Ursula re-settled the pillows, her hand fell on the butt of a revolver that had come from the desk by the head of the bed. She did not understand what it was, but the sight pained her.

"Wait a minute," said the invalid, and he took one little brass thimble-like thing from its inside. "I—I wanted to use it for something before you went out, but I saw you come up, and I don't want it any more. I must certainly get back to the world again. Dear old world! Nice old world! And Mrs. Cassidy prayed with you in the cellar, did she? And Van Cott thought it was a fire? Do you know, Sister Ursula, that all those things would have been impossible on any other planet? I'm going to get well, Sister Ursula."

In the long night, Sister Ursula, blushing all over under the eyes of the night-light, heard him laughing softly in his sleep.

EMILE ZOLA.

"Lions in Their Dens."

VI.—EMILE ZOLA.

By V. R. Mooney. Illustrations by E. M. Jessop.

(With photographs at various ages.)

"M. ZOLA?"

"No, monsieur, this is *not* No. 21 *bis*—this is No. 21."

By way of justification for the asperity of the tones in which this reply is given forth the concierge of No. 21 proceeds to inform me that every one makes the same mistake.

"It is a perpetual procession here," she goes on. "It is nothing but M. Zola? M. Zola? M. Zola? without cease. I wish people would learn the right address."

EMILE ZOLA.

Now I at least ought to have known better, for I had visited M. Zola before, so, feeling rather small, I beat a hurried retreat, and betook myself to No. 21 *bis*.

Unlike most Parisians, Zola has a whole house to himself, and, as you perceive at a glance on entering, a very richly decorated house it is; tapestries, bronzes, bas-reliefs, sculptures in stone and marble, are studiously arranged about the hall and the handsome staircase, the general effect, in the subdued light of windows of stained glass, being most artistic.

On the first landing, lances and swords and armour of different kinds shine out from behind tropical plants. On this landing is Zola's studio, which is full of indications of his love for the antique—a love that is not carried to extremes, however, for the high-backed, uncomfortable chairs of our forefathers, in which so many of his fellow-collectors find it necessary to seat themselves (or their visitors), are here replaced by spacious modern armchairs.

I am not kept long waiting.

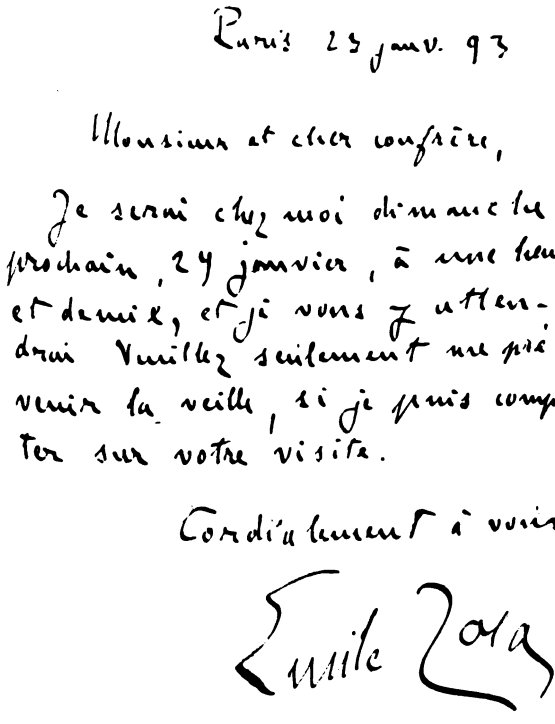
"Well, I am glad that this is a wet day, or else you would very likely have regretted losing the opportunity of going to the Bois."

Such are the *maitre's* first words after a hearty shake of the hands.

"So you want to know *all* about me. Now let me see what I can tell you without repeating myself."

And Zola sinks down into a small but comfortable armchair, with a small Turkish inlaid coffee and cigarette stand covered with books on one side, and on the other an antique wrought iron fender placed in front of an immense fireplace, and commences placidly the following monologue, which I give as nearly as possible in his own words.

(Facsimile of M. Zola's handwriting.)


Paris 23 janv. 93

Monsieur et cher confrère,

Je serai chez moi dimanche prochain, 24 janvier, à une heure et demie, et je vous y attendrai. Veuillez seulement me prévenir la veille, si je puis compter sur votre visite.

Cordialement à vous

Emile Zola

21 bis rue de Bruxelles.

"My father's mother was a Corfiote, he himself a Venetian, and my mother was a Parisian. My father and mother met in Paris, during one of my father's numerous visits here in connection with an aqueduct which he wanted to construct at Aix in Provence. Within a very short time of their first meeting, they were married. It was a love match. I was born in Paris, in 1840, and to-day I am, therefore, 53.

"In 1847 my father died, and left very little behind him, except lawsuits, which, through inexperience more than anything else, my mother and grandmother managed to lose.

"My education only then began, but until 12, when I had finally to enter college, I had it pretty much my own way. That

means I worked very little, and spent most of my time in the open air, running about in our glorious southern fields, and learning how to love and admire nature.

"At college I studied with varying success.

"What I liked best were mathematics and science. I hated Greek and Latin.

"It was during the last year of my college life that I made the acquaintance of two young fellows who may have been instrumental in making of me what I am now. As we had pretty much the same tastes it was our passion, whenever we could indulge in it, to run out in the fields, get on the banks of a stream, and for hours, under the shade of some tree, read the books of fiction which came to our possession. After each book had been gone through, we discussed its merits, chapter by chapter, studied the characters and the plot; all this more from a metaphysical than a literary point of view.

THE STAIRCASE.

"I left college in 1848, and came to Paris to get work, in order to help my mother. I found a situation which I soon had to give up, and, till 1861, I went through all the hardships that a destitute young man can undergo in Paris.

"Often have I spent in my attic the best part of the day, lying in bed to keep warm.

"Although, as you see, I am better off now, I often look back upon that time regretting that it cannot return.

"*Voyez vous*, privations and suffering were my lot, but I had in me the fire of youth. I had health, hope, unbounded confidence in myself, and ambition.

"*Ah oui!* It was a glorious time. I remember how I used to write for hours and hours in my bed; how everything was then fresh to me, how my inexperience made me look hopefully forward. *Enfin*, life seemed bright, beautiful, and cheerful.

"After all, I really think hope is a higher satisfaction than possession.

"But I stray from the subject.

"Let me see, you left me in bed trying to get warm, and waiting for someone to provide the necessary number of coppers for a dinner.

"In 1861, I at last found a sufficiently remunerative situation at Hachette's, the publishers.

"I began at 200 francs a month. I did my work so thoroughly that I was soon raised. After a certain time I was placed in the advertising department, and there came in contact with the writers and newspaper men, who, in my first literary efforts, gave me a helping hand.

"During my stay in that office, I never ceased writing.

"You must know that I was all my life a very hard and conscientious worker.

"After my day's work at the office, I used to read and write for hours at home by candlelight. In fact, the habit of writing at night became so inveterate that, long afterwards, when I had time in the day, I pulled down the blinds in my room and lit the lamp in order to work.

"Towards this epoch I met my two college friends again. One had gained some notoriety as a painter, the other was a student at the *ecole polytechnique*. We resumed our rambles in the woods and our discussions. This, I am convinced, was of great use to me, as our different ways of looking at things enabled me to judge of characters, and to appreciate differing opinions.

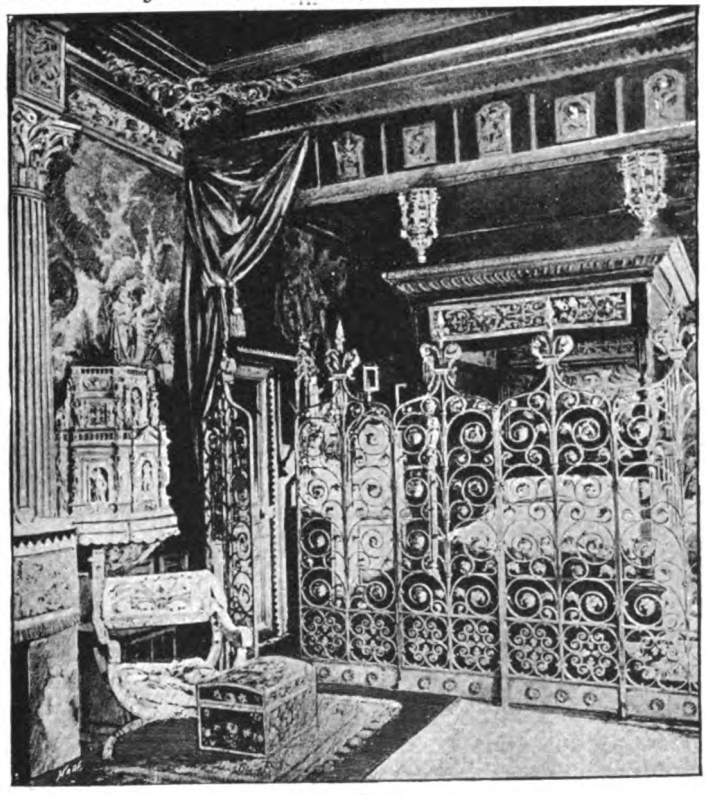
"Before I left college, viz., when I was 17, I had written the '*Contes à Ninon*.' These I retouched a little, and determined to try my luck as a writer with them.

"As usual, with young and unknown writers, publishers received me and politely returned my manuscript. I tried my employer, but, although he encouraged me, and showed his sense

of appreciation, by giving me a more responsible position, he refused to publish my story. Finally, I presented it to Mr. Hetzel, and to my indescribable joy he accepted it.

"The book was very favourably reviewed, but sold very poorly.

"Soon afterwards, I began contributing to the *Vie Parisienne* and the *Petit Journal*, and thus got launched in journalism.



THE BEDROOM.

"As my evenings alone did not enable me to do all the work I had in hand, I resigned my situation in 1867, and devoted myself exclusively to literature.

"This did not improve my position, and I was obliged, for a certain time, to suffer new hardships and privations.

"It is needless to follow my career step by step. You know what I am now—you see I have succeeded." L L

"Well, *mon cher maitre*, not many men can boast of a success equal to yours. Indeed, there is evidence enough in this very room of that success."

"That implies, of course, that you think I have an enormous account at the bank. You are mistaken. Every centime I get comes from the sale of my books, the rights of translation, etc. My royalty is 60 centimes per volume. This brings me about 300,000 francs a year, and I am not a man to economise. All this furniture, and the articles you see scattered about, I have slowly accumulated. I began to purchase with the first economies I ever made.

EMILE ZOLA.

"This passion which obliged me frequently to change residences in order to find room for the ever increasing number of objects was acquired by me through reading Victor Hugo in my childhood. It is not so ardent now, I regret to say."

As he got up to show me round, the light fell full on his face. I thought I noticed a look of melancholy, and made a remark to that effect.

With a sigh he replied, "*Mon cher monsieur*, I repeat I always think with pleasure of my garret. I had then no cares. I was, what I call, absolutely independent."

"But in what way are you dependent now?"

"More than you think. I was then my own reader and my only critic. I lived in my writings, and thought them perfect. Since then I belong to the public, upon whose judgment my success depends, upon whose appreciation my reward lies. Do not imagine that I do not frequently suffer deeply, that I am not wounded, and that I do not feel mortified and become discouraged by the misinterpretation of my motives. These are passing clouds, but they are not pleasant, I can assure you."

As he was unburdening his sorrows, we visited the apartment. It would be impossible to describe it in the short space of an article, as I must admit I seldom found such a mass, and at the same time such a variety, of objects collected.

The accompanying photos will be more eloquent than my pen.

Taste presides in everything; choice, disposal, grouping, and colouring. The southern nature of the host reveals itself in its love for bright colours, education and refinement in the subdued tones and harmonious *ensemble*.

He did not hesitate to show me everything; unfortunately, however, had I seen less, I would have remembered more.

As we walked back to the studio I returned to the previous subject, and asked him whether, as was generally supposed, he dashed through his books after a painstaking preliminary work.

He denied this.

"It is an error; I work very hard."

"What way do you proceed then, *cher maitre?*"

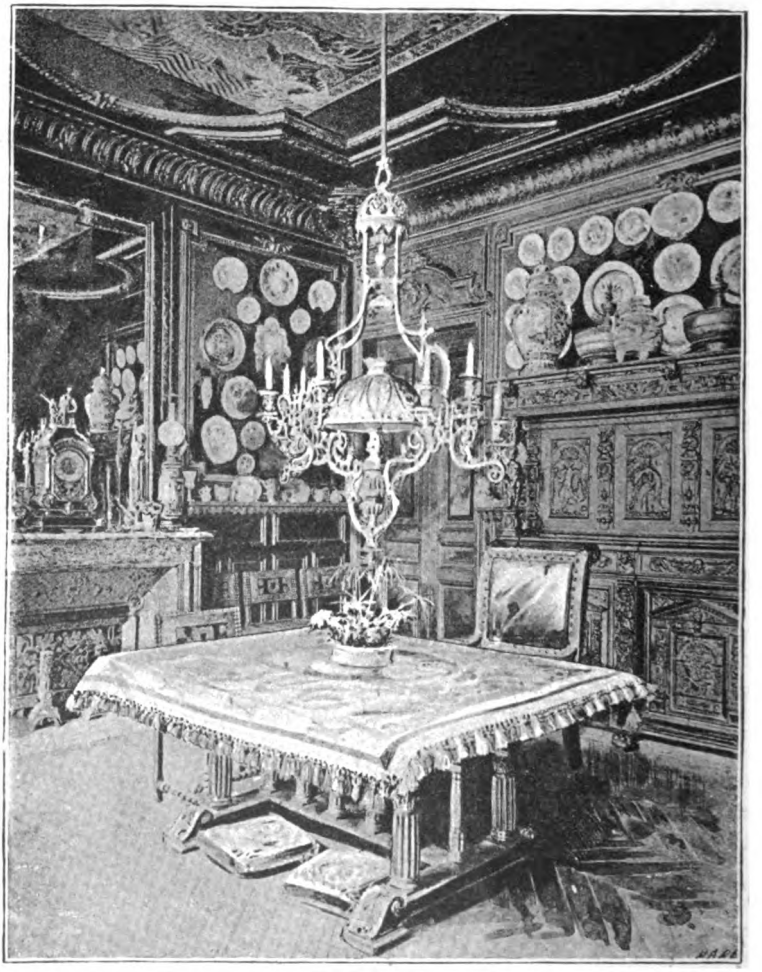
"Well, I never prepare a plot. I cannot do it. I have frequently meditated for hours, buried my head in my hands, closed my eyes, and got ill over it. But no use. I finally gave it up. What I do is to make three kinds of studies for each novel. The first I call a sketch, viz., I determine the dominant idea of the book, and the elements required to develop this idea. I also establish certain logical connections between one series of facts and another. The next *dossier* contains a study of the character of each actor in my work. For the principal ones I go even further. I enquire into the character of both father and mother, their life, the influence of their mutual relations on the temperament of the child. The way the latter was brought up, his schooldays, the surroundings and his associates up to the time I introduce him in my book. You see, therefore, I sail as close to nature as possible, and even take into account his personal appearance, health and heredity. My third preoccupation is to study the surroundings into which I intend to place my actors, the locality and the spot where certain parts may be acted. I enquire into the manners, habits, character, language, and even learn the jargon of the inhabitants of such localities.

"I frequently take pencil sketches and measurement of rooms, and know exactly how the furniture is placed. Finally, I know the appearance of such quarters by night and by day. After I have collected laboriously all this material, I sit down to my work regularly every morning, and do not write more than three pages of print a day."

"How long does it take you to produce that?"

"Well, not very long. The subject is so vivid that the work

proceeds slowly, but without interruption. In fact, I hardly ever make any erasures or alterations, and once my sheet is written and laid aside, I do not look at it again. The next morning I resume the thread, and the story proceeds to the end by logical progression.



THE DINING ROOM.

"I work like a mathematician. Before I begin I know into how many chapters the novel shall be divided. The descriptive parts have an allotted space, and if they are too long for one chapter

I terminate them in another. I try also to give some rest to the mind of the reader, or rather remove the tension caused by too long and stirring a passage, by interlarding something which diverts the attention for a time.

"Finally, I repeat, I have no preconceived plot. I do not know at the beginning of a chapter how it will end. Situations must logically follow one another, that is all."

Of course, after this, the conversation rolled on some of his principal works, particularly "La Terre."

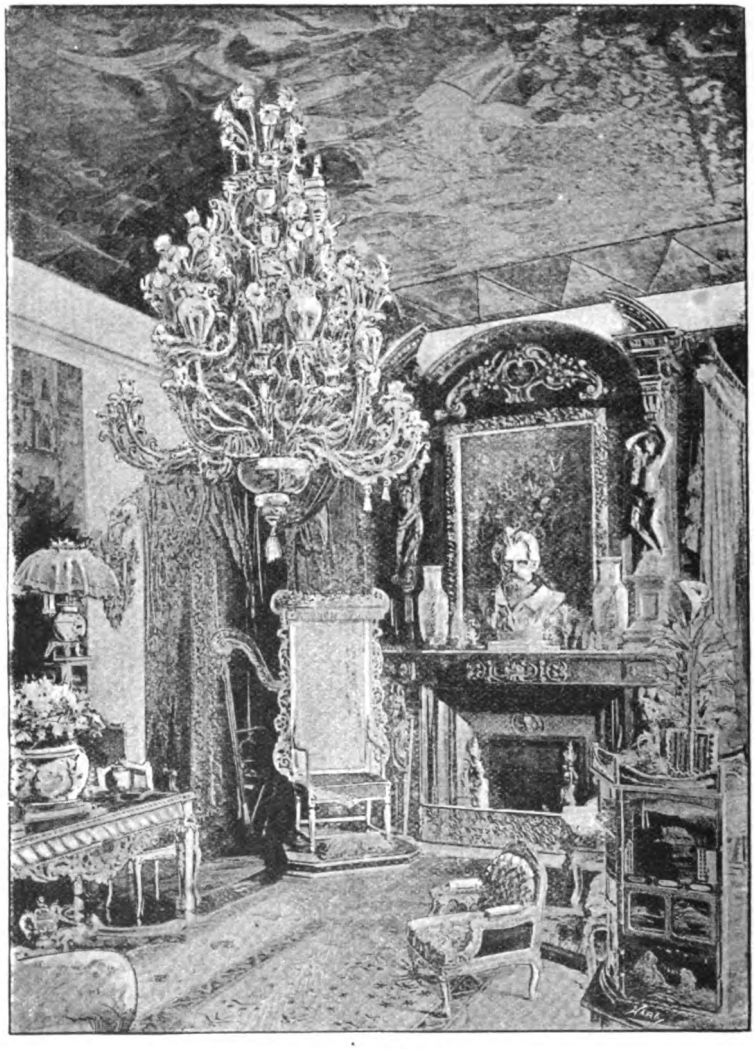
EMILE ZOLA.

In reply to the objection taken to that book, one of his arguments is that progress and science have made of man a being distinct from that of last century, and insisted that nowadays we must abandon the study of the metaphysical man of years gone by for an enquiry into the physiological creature of our days. That is my opinion, and it is in defence of this conviction that I worked for years."

The next subject upon which I thought I might tackle him was the "Debacle."

"How did I prepare my 'Debacle'? Well, in the same way as all my other books. You know I went over most of the battle-fields described by me. Moreover, I received innumerable letters on the subject. The most interesting ones came from the professors of Paris schools, who, being left without employment, enlisted. These letters, coming from educated men, contain, without one exception, the same lamentations, and give similar accounts of privations and suffering. They all describe how for days they had to go without food, and ragged; and how fast their numbers were thinned. Each had in his memoirs accounts illustrating the blundering ignorance of the commanders! I was violently attacked when the 'Debacle' appeared. Everything was criticised as usual, and many details declared inaccurate. But I ask you whether it is always possible to be as absolutely accurate in small details in a novel as in a history?

"Some dates have been misplaced, and some details relating to the colour of the troopers' collars were not right; but criticism of such absurd details cannot affect the treatment and the develop-



THE DRAWING ROOM.

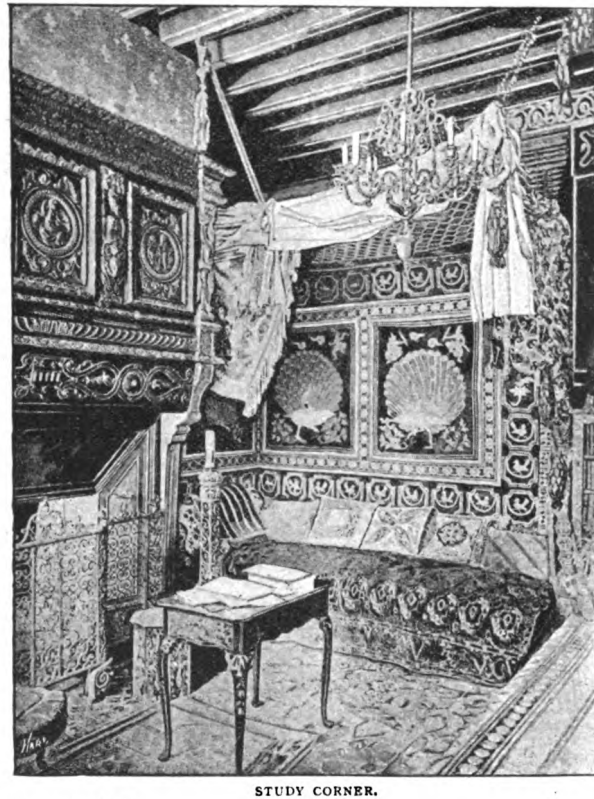
ment of the subject, and the conclusions arrived at. I am told that Marshal MacMahon is wild against me, and that he is preparing a reply to my book. It has always been my object to avoid

personalities. I never once accused MacMahon, but the facts prove that he acted ignorantly. History will be severer, and when those who write it consult documents as I did, they will not treat him with the deference I used.

"General Gallifet is also my enemy. Do you know why? Because I have not mentioned him."

"How does your 'Debacle' sell now, *cher maitre?*"

"Not so well as at the beginning, and the cause of it is the Panama scandal. When the unscrupulousness of a certain class of men was made bare, the initiators of the enquiry were accused by a section of the nation with want of patriotism. Curiously enough, the same accusation was levelled against my book, therefore, instead of being thanked for the courage I had of disclosing the evils, I am punished for it. The same influences acted against me in the last Academy elections. Before the Panama affair, I was certain to have a chair."



STUDY CORNER.

"Will you continue presenting yourself?"

"Certainly, until I get a seat. There is no reason why I should be excluded from that body, and if I abstain from presenting my candidature, it might be construed as an admission on my part that I considered justified the action of the academicians against me."

"When is your novel about 'Lourdes' going to appear?"

"Later than you think. I am working at present at Dr. Pascal, which closes my series of the Rougon Macquart novels."

"Would it be indiscreet to ask you what subject you intend treating this time?"

"No. It will be a philosophical and scientific defence of the principal work of my life—the twenty volumes of the Rougon Macquarts. You see I attach the greatest importance to this, and therefore give special attention to my work, which is meant to be a justification of my theories and *hardiesses*. After this I'll take 'Lourdes' in hand. 'Lourdes' will be followed by 'Rome,' and then by 'Paris.' They will form a triptych."

EMILE ZOLA.

"Namely?"

"Well, in the first I shall try to prove that the great scientific development of our time has inspired hopes in the mind of all classes, hopes which it has not realised to the satisfaction of the most impressionable, therefore the most exacting and unreasonable minds. How such minds have returned with greater conviction to the belief in the existence of something more powerful than science, a something which can alleviate the evils from which they suffer, or imagine they do.

"Among these there may even be social philanthropists, who may think that divine intercession is more efficacious to cure the suffering of the people than anarchist theories. In my 'Rome' I shall treat of the Neo-Catholicism, with its ambitions, its struggle, etc., as distinct from the pure religious sentiment of the pilgrims of 'Lourdes.'

"Finally, in 'Paris' I shall endeavour to lay bare the corruption and vice which devour that city; vice and corruption to which the whole civilised world brings its share. I need not say that these will be written in the shape of novels.

"For 'Lourdes' I have collected all my material. As you know, I followed a pilgrimage, and was given the kindest assistance by the clergy, who allowed me to consult every document in their possession. As usual, I receive every day letters from laymen and priests, who spontaneously supply me with information."

Zola thereupon got up, opened a drawer, and showed me piles of such letters. Among these I read one from a priest, who seemed convinced that before long Zola would be a convert. I asked him what he had seen at Lourdes.

"Nothing that I did not expect, considering that before going there I had had long conversations with eminent specialists in nervous diseases. I saw cures which would be called extraordinary by such as ignore the curative power of faith in hysteric complaints and its derivatives. But I did not see limbs straightened or replaced, nor has any monk or priest showed me or even alluded to such cures.

"But what struck me was that, contrary to what one is made to expect, I did not find among the clergy that aggressive and ostentatious proselytism. Everything is conducted in a dignified, quiet, unassuming manner."

Continuing to look among the letters, I picked one from an English lady, expressing the sincere hope that the "Debacle" would bear fruit, that the lesson it taught would be a warning to France, and save the nation from the errors it had fallen into during the Empire.

When I had done, Zola assured me that since the "Debacle" he was happy to say that he receives numerous such letters from England. This shows him that the hostile feeling against him tends to disappear.

Before withdrawing, I asked him whether he had heard any more of the thief who, assuming the title of a journalist, had stolen some of his bronzes.

With a laugh, Zola replied in the negative, and explained that he had to thank "Lourdes" for the theft.

"Since it has become known that I prepare that book, the clerical papers send me their reporters. I receive them without exception. On this occasion, I was talking to a friend when a card was presented bearing the title of a small such paper. I requested the servant to show the bearer in the drawing-room.

"Five minutes later I was with the fellow, who asked a couple of questions. Instead, however, of waiting for complete information, which I volunteered to give, he very politely withdrew, and only the next day did I discover that he had removed valuables for about 700 francs."

For how long I might have engaged the great and amiable novelist in conversation I don't know; but at this point, having listened to him for more than an hour and a half, I rose to leave.

And now that the heavy door has closed behind me, shall I attempt to compose a picture of Zola as I have seen him there in his room in his warm, many-pocketed Tyrolese jacket, braided with green, and buttoned up to the throat? Perhaps it is unnecessary, for his features must by this time be familiar to almost all.

ZOLA AT WORK.

Like all Southerners, Zola helps out his voice with frequent gestures; but he has none of the exuberant eloquence of his race. In society he is still, to a certain degree, and must always remain the victim of bashfulness; and his one attempt at public speaking was a complete failure. He has in him nothing of the boulevardier, and he is happy only when at work. Enforced idleness would mean misery to him.

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

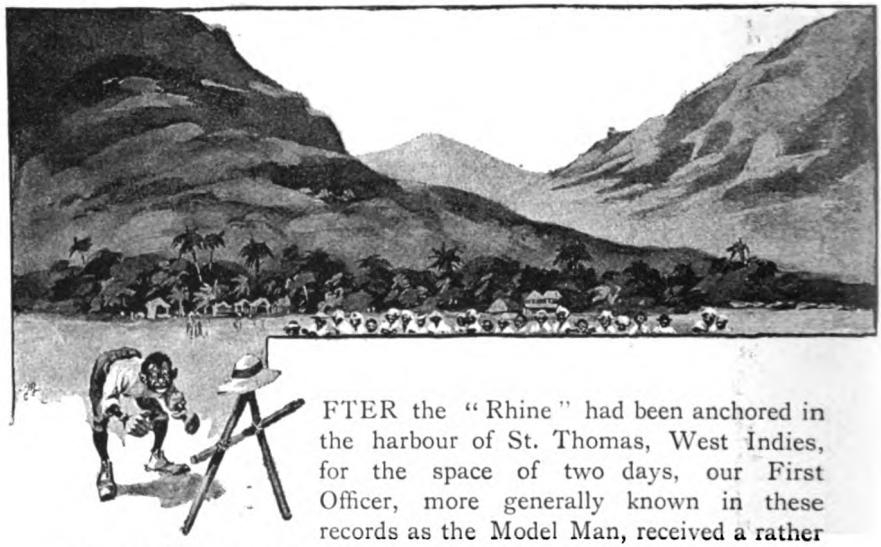
RUDYARD KIPLING.

The light that failed."

An Ethiopian Cricket Match.

By Eden Phillpotts.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.



AFTER the "Rhine" had been anchored in the harbour of St. Thomas, West Indies, for the space of two days, our First Officer, more generally known in these records as the Model Man, received a rather remarkable communication. It was a letter from a black sportsman, who issued a challenge to our ship on behalf of a local club. This note reminded the Model Man of a most successful cricket match in the past, when an eleven from the "Rhine" was victorious; and it suggested that, during the present visit of our vessel, a return match might be played. We talked the matter over, and I said:

"Of course you will accept."

But the Treasure answered:

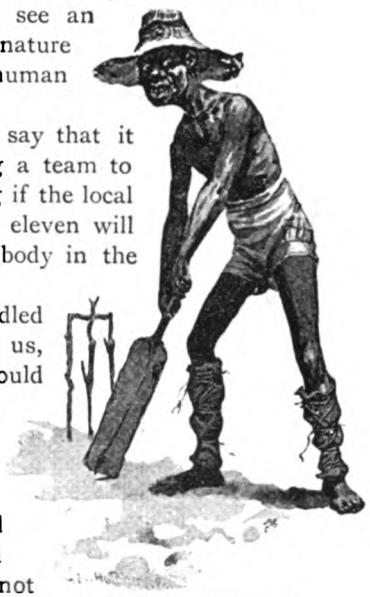
"You see there is always one great difficulty with black cricketers. They have a theory you cannot play the game properly in clothes, and they get themselves up for a match much the same as we should if we were going swimming."

"Why, last time we played," continued the Model Man, "only one man had anything you could fairly call raiment. He came on to the pitch with what he regarded as a pair of cocoanut-fibre trousers, and his team made him captain upon the strength of them."

I said:

"If they prefer to play undraped, I don't see that it much matters to us."

"Not personally, but a mixed audience cannot be expected to stand it," replied the Treasure. "We play cricket in St. Thomas upon a very public and central piece of ground, and, at one time, everybody used to turn out and watch the matches; but now, owing to the barbarous reasons I have given you, cricket has fallen into disrepute. Of course, to see an eleven taking the field in a state of nature makes dead against civilisation and human progress."



"AS IF THEY WERE GOING IN SWIMMING."

Finally, the Model Man wrote to say that it would give him great pleasure to bring a team to the ground upon the following morning if the local talent promised to wear clothes. "My eleven will absolutely refuse to play against anybody in the nude," he wound up.

An hour later a negro in a boat paddled out to us with an answer. He hailed us, and we asked him if his people would accept our terms.

"Yes, massa, we all put fings on, but we much sooner play cricket widdout."

"Nonsense," shouted back the Model Man, "Cricket is a civilised game, and must be followed in a civilised way, or not at all. We will be on the ground at ten o'clock."

The messenger rowed off, and a great discussion began as to the constitution of our team. Everybody wanted to go to the match, and sit in the shade and look on and criticise, but no one much cared about playing. The Captain of the "Rhine" absolutely refused, to begin with. He said:

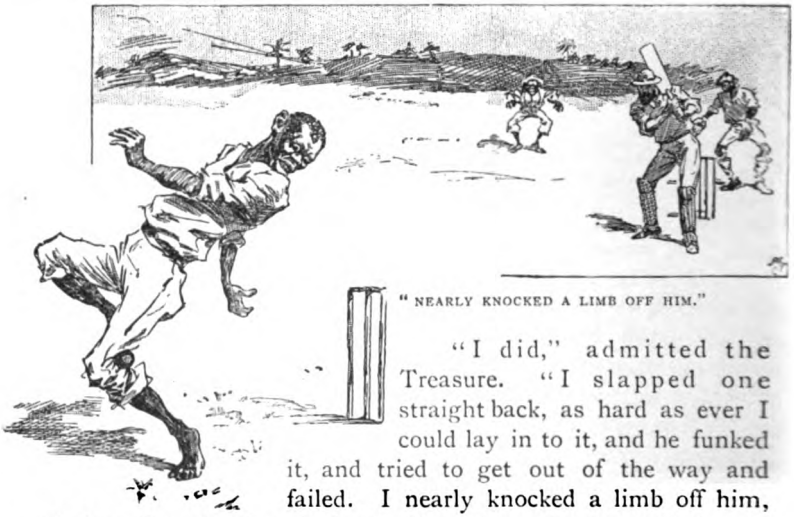
"I would do anything for my officers—anything in reason; but cricket is out of the question. I shall, however, be on the ground with some ladies. A good appreciative audience is everything in these cases. Moreover, I will umpire if the tide turns against us."

The Treasure only consented to play after much pressure. He said:

"You know what the wicket is like; it's simply mountainous,

and black men have no control over their bowling. For you medium-sized chaps it may be comparatively safe, but bowling at me is like bowling at a haystack—you cannot miss. When I go in, the blacks never bother about the stumps, but just let fly at random on the chance of winging me. Last match here, I hit their crack fast bowler all over the island, and he got mad at last, and gave up attempting to bowl me, but just tried to kill me."

"You scored off him, though," said our Fourth Officer, who remembered the incident.



"NEARLY KNOCKED A LIMB OFF HIM."

"I did," admitted the Treasure. "I slapped one straight back, as hard as ever I could lay in to it, and he funked it, and tried to get out of the way and failed. I nearly knocked a limb off him, and then he abandoned the ball, and went and sulked and chattered to himself in the deep field."

The Doctor said it would give him great pleasure to play, but he added that he should feel very averse to bowling against anybody with nothing on. Then the Model Man answered:

"You need not fear. The negroes are very particular about pads and such things. They don't wear shoes, for nothing could hurt their feet, but they never dream of batting without leg-guards, because a nigger's shins are his weak spot. These fellows are not much good at cricket after you have once hit them hard. Either they get cross and throw up the whole thing, and leave the ground and go home to their families, or else they become frightened and servile. I have known them almost beg for mercy before each ball."

"You'll play, of course," said the Fourth Officer to me.

"Certainly, if you will," I answered. Then he replied:

"I shall undoubtedly play. I'm not a man who does much with the bat, but my bowling is rather out of the common. I have a natural leg-break which baffles fellows frightfully. Why, there was a question raised once about playing me for my county."

I did not ask him which county, because one should never goad a willing horse. The Fourth Officer had been in a thoroughly mendacious vein ever since we left St. Kitts; the fault grew upon him, and now he began to utter transparent inaccuracies at all hours, from sheer love of them.

After much argument and conversation, our team was finally selected, the last man chosen being a black stoker of great size and strength.

"I regard him as a speculation," explained the Captain of our side; "either he will get out first ball or make a hundred. There are no half-measures with him."

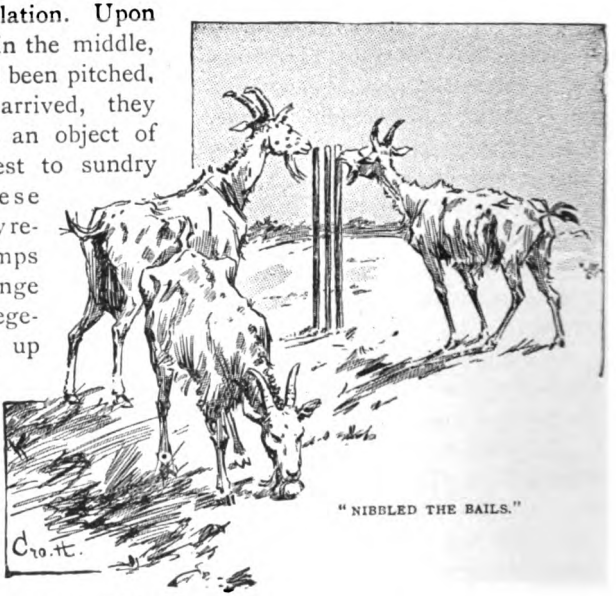
As we approached the ground on the following morning, our Model Man confided to me a great source of anxiety. This was the fielding. He said:

"You see, men don't mind batting, but they get very unsportsmanlike when it comes to going out into the field. Some actually hide, or pretend they have engagements; others feign illness and retire; others, again, salve their miserable consciences by paying a negro a shilling to go and field for them. I only mention this. I know you're not the man to do such things; but, between ourselves, I fear the Doctor is just a sort of chap to escape fielding. There are others also I must keep an eye upon. Being captain of a scratch cricket team in the Tropics is no light task, I can tell you."

A considerable crowd had gathered to see the conflict. The negroes sat and lolled round the ground, while, behind them, buggies and horsemen were drawn up. Conspicuous in that gay throng appeared the Captain of the "Rhine," seated on a brown horse, amid female equestrians. Beyond the audience rose a belt of tamarind and flamboyant trees, the latter with gigantic green and brown seed-pods hanging from their branches; and above these woods, sloping upwards to the blue sky, extended the hills, with winding roads, visible here and there through the foliage that covered them, and with many a flagstaff and white cottage scattered upon their sides.

The ground itself suggested golf rather than cricket. Here and there a little dried-up grass occurred, but it collected in lonely tufts, between which extended great ravines and hillocks and boulders and

patches of desolation. Upon a barren spot in the middle, the wickets had been pitched. When we arrived, they appeared to be an object of no little interest to sundry goats. These beasts evidently regarding the stumps as some strange new form of vegetation, sprang up in a single night from the arid soil, sauntered round them enquiringly, and a shabby he-goat, braver than his companions, nibbled the bails.



"NIBBLED THE BAILS."

Our opponents, adequately attired, had arrived. They constituted a motley, good-humoured gathering in all shades. One, John Smith, a genial hybrid, commanded them, and presently a great shout arose, when it transpired that he had secured choice of innings. The Doctor said, in a tone of reproof:

"Hang it, John, you've only won the toss. You couldn't make a bigger row if you'd won the match."

"Great fing to go in fus, sar," explained John; "we go in fus now, when we's fresh."

Then the Model Man led out his warriors. I sauntered across the pitch with the Treasure, and examined its peculiarities. We were discussing a curious geological formation, midway between the wickets, when our Fourth Officer approached in some glee at a great discovery. He had found a little hill, rather wide of the stumps,

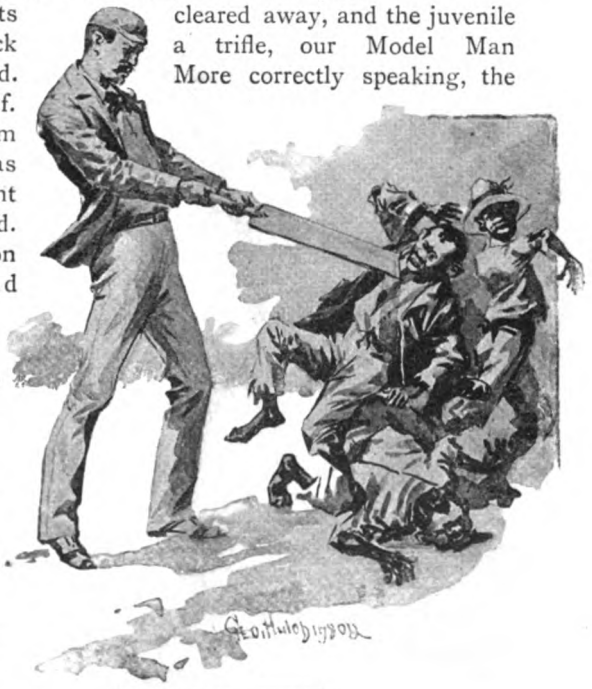
JOHN SMITH.

on one side, and he explained that whenever he dropped a ball on this elevation, he must bowl an Ethiop.

"You see, my natural leg-break will take the ball dead into the wicket every time," he said.

We hoped it might be so; and he begged us to keep the thing a profound secret, because, as he said, if it got about that we were going to utilise this hill to such an extent, the enemy would probably send out and have it removed, or alter the pitch.

After the goats cleared away, and the juvenile spectators driven back a trifle, our Model Man arranged his field. More correctly speaking, the field arranged itself. Indeed, our team hardly proved as amenable as might have been wished. The Doctor insisted on taking long-leg and long-off.



"DRIVEN BACK A TRIFLE."

"Why?" asked his Captain, looking rather distrustfully at a buggy with some red parasols in it, which would be extremely close to the Doctor at long-leg.

"It isn't that, old chap," replied our physician, cheerfully, following the Model Man's eye. "In fact, I'm not sure if I even know those girls. I only suggested a place in the long field because I'm a safe catch. That's important."

So he had his way.

Meantime, the Treasure found some other parasols—white ones—and placed himself within easy chatting distance. Investigation proved that the white parasols were protecting the Enchantress and her mother. The Model Man said that he might just as well be on the ship as there. So he ordered his man up

to take the wicket. The Treasure came reluctantly, and absolutely declined to keep wicket. He declared that it was simple murder to make a person of his size attempt such a thing on such a ground.

He led me aside privately, and said:

"Look here, you know that walking-stick of mine, manufactured from a shark's backbone—the one you are always worrying me to give you? Well, I will, when we go back to the ship, if you'll take the wicket. If you fall at your post, then your heirs shall have it."

I closed on this bargain promptly, and while I dressed up in all sorts of life-saving inventions used at cricket, the Treasure took an unobtrusive, circuitous route back to the white parasols.

John Smith himself and another negro, who was said to be related to him by marriage, came in first. They were padded up to the eyes, and evidently felt the importance of their position. Then a black umpire said: "Play, gem'men," and our Fourth Officer started with his world-famed, natural leg-break. He bowled three wides in succession as a preliminary. It is not easy to bowl wides underhand, but that Fourth Officer managed it; and I began to understand why, after all, his county had determined to struggle along without him.

"What's the matter, old man?" asked our Captain, who was fielding at short-slip.

"It's all right, old chap; you wait, answered the Fourth Officer, full of confidence.

"Yes, quite so, but they count one against us every time. I didn't know whether you knew it," explained the Model Man.

Meantime the bowler made further futile attempts to drop the ball upon the mound he had discovered. At last he actually did do so, but instead of breaking in and taking a wicket, as we, who were in the secret, hoped, the batsman got hold of it, and hit it high and hard to long-leg. All eyes turned to see if the Doctor's estimate of his own powers at a catch was justified. But he had disappeared entirely. He had not even left a substitute. Everybody shouted with dismay, and then the Doctor suddenly bounded on to the field. He distinctly came out of the buggy, from between the red parasols. If he had not actually known those girls, he must have introduced himself, or prevailed upon somebody else to do so. He tore into the scene of action, looking for the ball.

"It's in the air, you fool," yelled a dozen voices. Then it fell within a yard of the Doctor. A child could have caught it. We were all quite unsettled. The Model Man said:

"I'm not a bit surprised—it's just what I expected."

And the Fourth Officer said:

"I don't really see what good it is my bowling for catches at long-leg if there's no long-leg."

And the Doctor said:

"Wouldn't have done it for money. Hadn't the faintest idea you'd started. I saw you bowling balls all over the place, miles away from the wicket, and I thought you were merely practising." Which was rather an unpleasant thing for the Fourth Officer to hear.

"A BLACK UMPIRE."

Then the game steadied down and proceeded. Our Captain took the ball, after the underhand expert had got a few within sight of the wicket, and so finished his over. The Model Man was much more successful, for he clean-bowled a negro with his third delivery. It pitched in a sort of mountain-pass, about ten feet from the wicket; then it branched off to the right and hit a stone, and came back again, and finally took the off stump. I don't see how anybody alive could have played it. The batsman retired utterly bewildered, and the Model Man assured me he had never sent down a better ball.

A slogger came in next, and made runs rather rapidly, but nothing much happened until the Fourth Officer's third over. Then he fell foul of me, and took exception to my method of keeping the wicket. He was being hit about pretty generally, and had become very hot, so, at another time, I should not have retorted upon him; but, when he spoke, I was hot too, and being hit about also, so I answered without deliberation. He said:

"Can't you even try to stump them?"

And I replied:

"I might, if my arms were ten feet long."

Then he said:

"You've had dozens of chances. I always want a wicket-keeper for my bowling."

Whereupon I answered:

"You want twenty—in a row. One's no good."

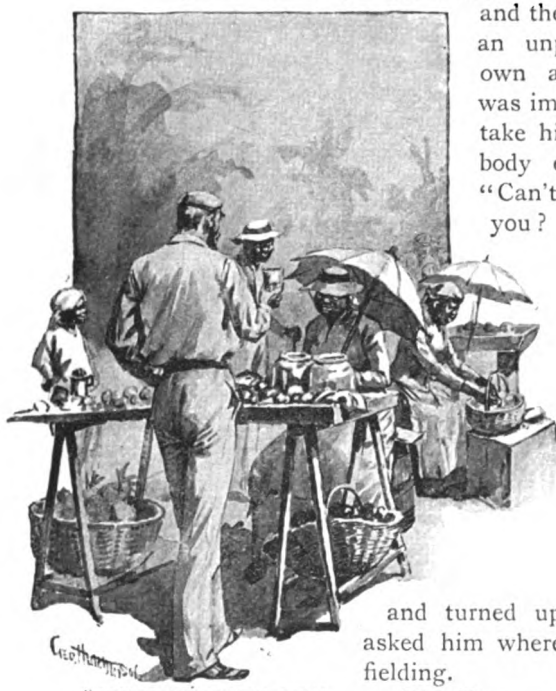
He said:

"You don't like standing up to my fast ones, that's the truth."

And I responded:

"Oh, bless you, I'd stand up to them all right, if I knew *where* to stand. A wicket-keeper's supposed to keep the wicket, not run all over the ground after wides."

During this unseemly argument, the Model Man, the Treasure, and the Doctor were all having an unpleasantness on their own account. The Doctor was imploring our Captain to take himself off and let somebody else bowl. He said: "Can't you see they've collared you? They've scored twenty runs. Don't think that *I* want to go on. Far from it. I'm only speaking for the good of the side."



"REFRESHMENTS WERE BEING SOLD."

But the Model Man refused to leave off bowling for anybody. He emphatically denied that they had collared him. Then he changed the subject, and turned upon the Treasure, and asked him where he supposed he was fielding.

The Treasure answered:

"This is mid-on. I'm all right."

"You may think it's mid-on, but it isn't," shouted back the worried Model Man. "I've no doubt you're all right," he continued, bitterly, "but you're no sportsman."

After twenty more runs had been scored, the Fourth Officer unexpectedly and frankly admitted that he was not in form. He relinquished the ball, and said he had the makings of a sunstroke about his head, and went off to field among a few friends in a patch of shade under a tree, where all kinds of refreshments were

being sold. Then our Captain held a consultation, and determined to try a complete change in the attack. He called upon the Doctor and the Treasure, and told them just to bowl quietly and carefully, and as straight as possible.

The Treasure started with yorkers; which was about the most effective thing he could have done, for, whenever he got one on the wicket, it bowled a black man. Two negroes, including the slogger, fell to him in his first over. Then the Doctor tried his hand, and began by being absurdly particular about the field. He put five men in the slips, and then started with terrifically fast full pitches to leg. A good player would have hit one and all of these right out of the island into the sea, but the people who were now at the wickets merely got out of the way, and let the Doctor's deliveries proceed to the boundary for three byes each.

Upon this he insulted me, as the Fourth Officer had done before him. He said:

"Do stand up to them, old man."

I said:

"Why should I? I'm out to enjoy myself. I'm a human being, not a target. Besides, long-stop will lose interest in the game if he has nothing to do."

"They don't have long-stops in first-class cricket," grumbled the Doctor. "You've got no proper pride."

Then I said:

"Of course, if you are mistaking this display for first-class cricket, it's no good arguing with you."

In his second over the Doctor bowled a shade straighter, and began knocking the batsmen about, and hurting them and frightening them. If they had only kept in front of the wicket, and put their bats between their legs out of the way, they might have been safe enough, but they dashed nervously about and tried to escape; and the ball would shoot and hit their toes, or rise and threaten their heads, or break back into their stomachs. Then the bowler got a man "retired hurt," and a regular panic set in.

"I'm keeping down the run-getting, anyhow," said the elated Doctor.

"Yes, and you'll have to mend all these local celebrities for nothing after the match," replied our Treasure.

The latter had taken several more wickets, and now the score stood at sixty, with three further blacks to bat. About this time I made an appeal to the umpire upon a question of stumping a

man, but he had his back turned and was buying a piece of sugar-cane. He apologised profusely. He said :

"I'se too sorry, Massa, jus' too sorry, but I'se dam hungry, Sar."

Hungry ! Whoever heard of an umpire being hungry ? Thirsty they may be, and generally are, but hunger is a paltry plea to raise.

Soon afterwards, our black stoker made two brilliant catches, one after the other, the Treasure quickly bowled their last man, and the innings closed for seventy-three runs.

"BLACK STOKER MADE TWO BRILLIANT CATCHES."

Then the rival teams scattered through St. Thomas for luncheon, the spectators dispersed, and the goats had the cricket ground all to themselves until the afternoon.

Some lively betting took place during our meal. The Model Man was gloomy, and doubted the ability of his eleven to make the necessary score on such a wicket ; but the Doctor appeared extremely sanguine, and the Fourth Officer actually guaranteed half the runs himself. He said :

"Though not a finished bat, yet it often happens that I come off with the willow when I fail with the leather."

It struck me that if his success with one was proportionate to his failure with the other, there seemed just reason for hoping he would get into three figures that afternoon.

Our Captain grew very anxious about the order of going in. Finally, he determined to start with the black stoker and me. He said :

"You play steadily and cautiously and let him hit. If it chances to be his day, we may, after all, win with ten wickets in hand. Stranger things have happened at cricket."

"Not many," I replied ; "but we will do our best.'

Our best, unfortunately, did not amount to much. The match was resumed at half-past three, before an increased gathering of onlookers ; and three distinct rounds of applause greeted the gigantic stoker and me as we marched to the wickets. It proved

a fortunate thing that we got the applause then, because we might have missed it later. My own innings, for instance, did not afford the smallest loophole for enthusiasm at any time.

The black certainly began well. He hit the first ball he received clean out of the ground for six runs, but the second ball retaliated and smote him direfully somewhere in the small ribs. Thereupon, he fell down and rolled twenty yards to allay the agony, after which he rose up and withdrew, declaring that he had met his death, and that no power on earth would induce him to bat again. These negroes never forget an injury of this kind. If our black stoker lives over to-morrow, he will probably collect his colleagues from the ship, and row ashore by night and seek out the local bowler, and make it very unrestful and exciting for him.

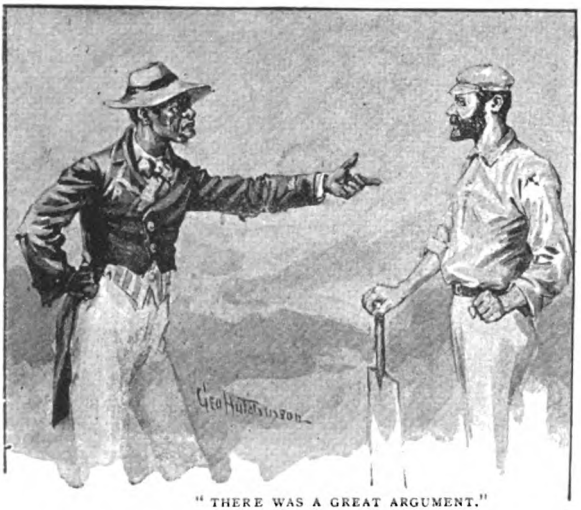
"SOMEWHERE IN THE SMALL RIBS."

The Model Man now came in, but he had the misfortune to lose my assistance almost immediately. I was caught at short leg after a patient innings of ten, slightly marred, however, by about the same number of chances. The Fourth Officer took my place. He began by nearly running out his Captain. If point had not stopped to dance and rub his leg, the wicket must have fallen. Then the new-comer settled down and played with great care, and irritated the bowlers extremely by giving them advice and criticising their efforts. Once they sent him so slow a ball that it never reached the wicket at all. Then our Fourth Officer rushed out and hit it after it had stopped, and so, rather ingeniously, scored two. It was a revolutionary sort of stroke, and the umpire said it must not be counted, but the batsman insisted upon having the runs put down. Of course, to argue with any umpire is madness. This black one simply waited for the next over, and then gave our Fourth Officer out "leg before." There was a great argument, but the umpire's ruling had to be upheld, and the bats-

man retired, declaring that he would never play cricket with savages again as long as he lived. He said:

"In the first place the ball was a wide, and in the second, after breaking a yard and a half, it hit my elbow. Then that black ass gives me out 'leg before.' It's sickening. Emancipation is the biggest error of the century. I'm going back to the ship." But he did not. He found something under a yellow parasol that comforted him.

The Doctor came in next, and hit the first ball he received over the bowler's head for three. Encouraged by this success, he ran half across the ground to the next one, missed it, and would have been stumped under ordinary circumstances, but the ball, instead of going to the wicket-keeper, shunted off at a sort of junction, and proceeded to short-slip. He, desiring the honour of defeating the Doctor, would not give the ball up, and tried to put the wicket down himself. This the outraged custodian of the stumps refused to permit, and while they were wrangling about it, and the rest of the team were screaming directions, our batsman galloped safely back amidst loud applause.



"THERE WAS A GREAT ARGUMENT."

We made fifty-eight for four wickets, the Model Man being the next to succumb. He had performed well, in something approaching style, for thirty runs. After him came the Treasure. He played forward very tamely at everything, until a ball suddenly got up and skinned two of his knuckles. Then he grew excited, and began hitting very hard, and making runs at a tremendous pace.

Meanwhile the Doctor, finding his wicket still intact, suddenly became enthusiastic and took extraordinary interest in his innings. Between each ball he marched about the pitch and grubbed up

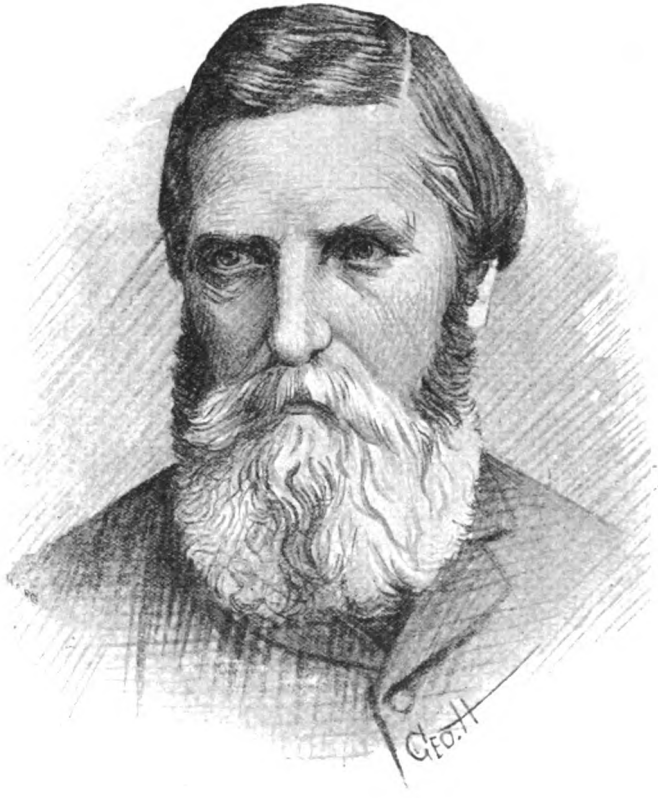
tufts of grass and threw away stones, and patted the different elevations and acclivities with his bat. But he might just as well have patted the Alps, or any other mountain range. He hit a fast ball straight up into the air, when only five or six runs were wanted to win the match. It was one of those awkward, lofty hits that half the field can get to, if they only look alive. In this case, four negroes were all waiting to secure him, so the Doctor escaped again. Then, evidently under the impression that he bore a charmed life, he began taking great liberties, and p...ing straight balls and strolling about out of his ground, and so forth. Finally, amid some intricate manœuvres, he jumped on to his own wicket, and retired well pleased with his performance. The Treasure went on hitting and being hit for a few minutes longer; then he made the winning stroke, and the contest came to a happy conclusion.

With one or two exceptions, everybody had much enjoyed the match; and that night, I recollect, we sat and smoked late on the deck of the "Rhine," fought our battle once more, explained our theories of cricket to one another, and agreed that it was a great and grand amusement.

"But," said the Fourth Officer, "it is not a pastime in which your nigger will ever excel. He cannot learn the rules, let alone play the game."

"No," I answered, "he does not excel at it, because, 'unstable as water,' the Ethiopian will never excel at anything; but he does quite as well as one might have expected, and, if he had a better ground, might play a better game."

Certainly that cricket ground requires attention. To level it, though doubtless an engineering feat, should not be impossible. If an earthquake could be arranged, it might leave a surface for steam rollers to begin working upon; but no mere patching or tinkering will answer the purpose. Something definite and drastic and colossal must be done to the cricket ground we played on at St. Thomas before it can become fairly worthy of the name.



R. M. Ballantyne

My First Book.

By R. M. Ballantyne.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.

(*Photographs by Messrs. Fradelle & Young.*)

HAVING been asked to give some account of the commencement of my literary career, I begin by remarking that my first book was not a tale or "story-book," but a free-and-easy record of personal adventure and every-day life in those wild regions of North America which are known, variously, as Rupert's Land—The Hudson's Bay Territory—The Nor' West, and "The Great Lone Land."

The record was never meant to see the light in the form of a book. It was written solely for the eye of my mother, but, as it may be said that it was the means of leading me ultimately into the path of my life-work, and was penned under somewhat peculiar circumstances, it may not be out of place to refer to it particularly here.

"WHERE I WROTE MY FIRST BOOK."

(*A Sketch by the Author.*)

The circumstances were as follows:—

After having spent about six years in the wild Nor' West, as a servant of the Hudson's Bay Fur Company, I found myself, one summer—at the advanced age of twenty-two—in charge of an out-post on the uninhabited northern shores of the gulf of St. Lawrence named Seven Islands. It was a dreary, desolate spot; at that

time far beyond the bounds ot civilisation. The gulf, just opposite the establishment, was about fifty miles broad. The ships which passed up and down it were invisible, not only on account of distance, but because of seven islands at the mouth of the bay coming between them and the outpost. My next neighbour, in command of a similar post up the gulf, was about seventy miles distant. The nearest house down the gulf was about eighty miles off, and behind us lay the virgin forests, with swamps, lakes, prairies, and mountains, stretching away without break right across the continent to the Pacific Ocean.

MR. BALLANTYNE'S HOUSE AT HARROW.

The outpost—which, in virtue of a ship's carronade and a flagstaff, was occasionally styled a "fort"—consisted of four wooden buildings. One of these—the largest, with a verandah—was the Residency. There was an offshoot in rear which served as a kitchen. The other houses were a store for goods wherewith to carry on trade with the Indians, a stable, and a workshop. The whole population of the establishment—indeed of the surrounding district—consisted of myself and one man—also a horse! The horse occupied the stable, I dwelt in the Residency, the rest of the population lived in the kitchen.

There were, indeed, other five men belonging to the establishment, but these did not affect its desolation, for they were away netting salmon at a river about twenty miles distant at the time I write of.

My "Friday"—who was a French-Canadian—being cook, as well as man-of-all-works, found a little occupation in attending to the duties of his office, but the unfortunate Governor had nothing whatever to do except await the arrival of Indians, who were not due at that time. The horse was a bad one, without a saddle, and in possession of a pronounced backbone. My "Friday" was not sociable. I had no books, no newspapers, no magazines or literature of any kind, no game to shoot, no boat wherewith to prosecute fishing in the bay, and no prospect of seeing any one to speak to for weeks, if not months, to come. But I had pen and ink, and, by great good fortune, was in possession of a blank paper book fully an inch thick.

These, then, were the circumstances in which I began my first book.

When that book was finished, and, not long afterwards, submitted to the—I need hardly say favourable—criticism of my mother, I had not the most distant idea of taking to authorship as a profession. Even when a printer-cousin, seeing the MS., offered to print it, and the well-known Blackwood, of Edinburgh, seeing the book, offered to publish it—and did publish it—my ambition was still so absolutely asleep that I did not again put pen to paper in *that* way for eight years thereafter, although I might have been encouraged thereto by the fact that this first book—named "Hudson's Bay"—besides being a commercial success, received favourable notice from the press.

It was not until the year 1854 that my literary path was opened up. At that time I was a partner in the late publishing firm of Constable & Co. of Edinburgh. Happening one day to meet with the late William Nelson, publisher, I was asked by him how I should like the idea of taking to literature as a profession. My answer I forget. It must have been vague, for I had never thought of the subject before.

"Well," said he, "what would you think of trying to write a story?"

Somewhat amused, I replied that I did not know what to think, but I would try if he wished me to do so.

"Do so," said he, "and go to work at once"—or words to that effect.

I went to work at once, and wrote my first story or work of fiction. It was published in 1855 under the name of "Snowflakes and Sunbeams; or, The Young Furtraders." Afterwards the first part of the title was dropped, and the book is now known as "The Young Furtraders." From that day to this I have lived by making story-books for young folk.

THE HALL.

From what I have said it will be seen that I have never aimed at the achieving of this position, and I hope that it is not presumptuous in me to think—and to derive much comfort from the thought—that God led me into the particular path along which I have walked for so many years.

The scene of my first story was naturally laid in those backwoods with which I was familiar, and the story itself was founded

on the adventures and experiences of myself and my companions. When a second book was required of me, I stuck to the same regions, but changed the locality. When casting about in my mind for a suitable subject, I happened to meet with an old retired "Nor'wester" who had spent an adventurous life in Rupert's Land. Among other duties he had been sent to establish an outpost of the Hudson Bay Company at Ungava Bay, one of the most dreary parts of a desolate region. On hearing what I wanted he sat down and wrote a long narrative of his proceedings there, which he placed at my disposal, and thus furnished me with the foundation of "Ungava."

But now I had reached the end of my tether, and when a third story was wanted I was compelled to seek new fields of adventure in the books of travellers. Regarding the Southern seas as the most romantic part of the world—after the backwoods!—I mentally and spiritually plunged into those warm waters, and the dive resulted in the "Coral Island."

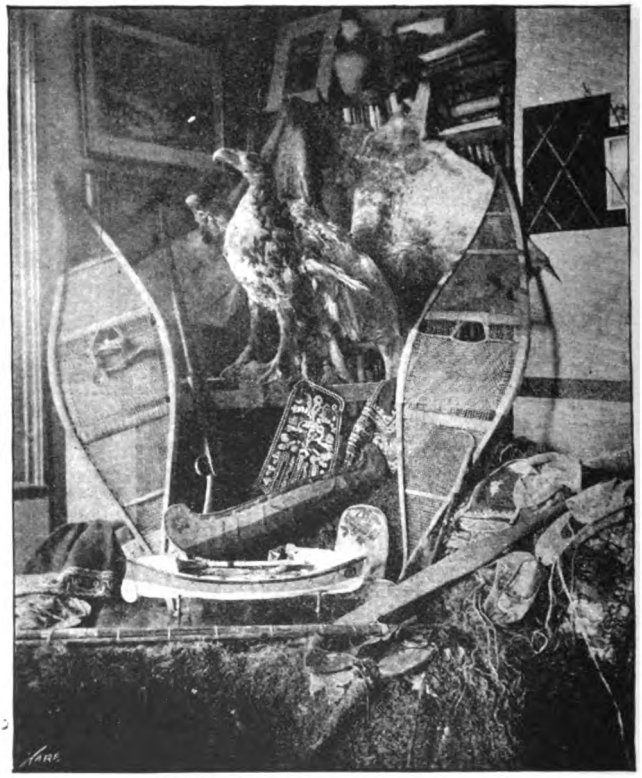
It now began to be borne in upon me that there was something not quite satisfactory in describing, expatiating on, and energising in, regions which one has never seen. For one thing, it was needful to be always carefully on the watch to avoid falling into mistakes geographical, topographical, natural-historical, and otherwise.

For instance, despite the utmost care of which I was capable while studying up for the "Coral Island," I fell into a blunder through ignorance in regard to a familiar fruit. I was under the impression that cocoanuts grew on their trees in the same form as that in which they are usually presented to us in grocers' windows —namely, about the size of a large fist with three spots at one end. Learning from trustworthy books that at a certain stage of development the nut contains a delicious beverage like lemonade, I sent one of my heroes up a tree for a nut, through the shell of which he bored a hole with a penknife. It was not till long after the story was published that my own brother—who had voyaged in Southern seas—wrote to draw my attention to the fact that the cocoanut is nearly as large as a man's head, and its outer husk is over an inch thick, so that no ordinary penknife could bore to its interior! Of course I should have known this, and, perhaps, should be ashamed of my ignorance, but, somehow, I'm not!

I admit that this was a slip, but such, and other slips, hardly justify the remark that some people have not hesitated to make, namely, that I have a tendency to draw the long bow. I feel

almost sensitive on this point, for I have always laboured to be true to nature and to fact even in my wildest flights of fancy.

This reminds me of the remark made to myself once by a lady in reference to this same "Coral Island." "There is one thing, Mr. Ballantyne," she said, "which I really find it hard to believe. You make one of your three boys dive into a clear pool, go to the bottom, and then, turning on his back, look up and wink and laugh at the other two."



TROPHIES FROM MR. BALLANTYNE'S TRAVELS.

"No, no, not '*laugh*,'" said I, remonstratively.

"Well, then, you make him smile."

"Ah, that is true, but there is a vast difference between laughing and smiling under water. But is it not singular that you should doubt the only incident in the story which I personally verified? I happened to be in lodgings at the seaside while writing that story, and, after penning the passage you refer to, I

went down to the shore, pulled off my clothes, dived to the bottom, turned on my back, and, looking up, I smiled and winked."

The lady laughed, but I have never been quite sure, from the tone of that laugh, whether it was a laugh of conviction or of unbelief. It is not improbable that my fair friend's mental constitution may have been somewhat similar to that of the old

THE DINING ROOM.

woman who declined to believe her sailor-grandson when he told her he had seen flying-fish, but at once recognised his veracity when he said he had seen the remains of Pharaoh's chariot wheels on the shores of the Red Sea.

Recognising, then, the difficulties of my position, I formed the resolution to visit—when possible—the scenes in which my stories were laid; converse with the people who, under modification, were to form the *dramatis personæ* of the tales, and, generally, to obtain information in each case, as far as lay in my power, from the fountain head.

Thus, when about to begin "The Lifeboat," I went to Ramsgate, and, for some time, was hand and glove with Jarman,

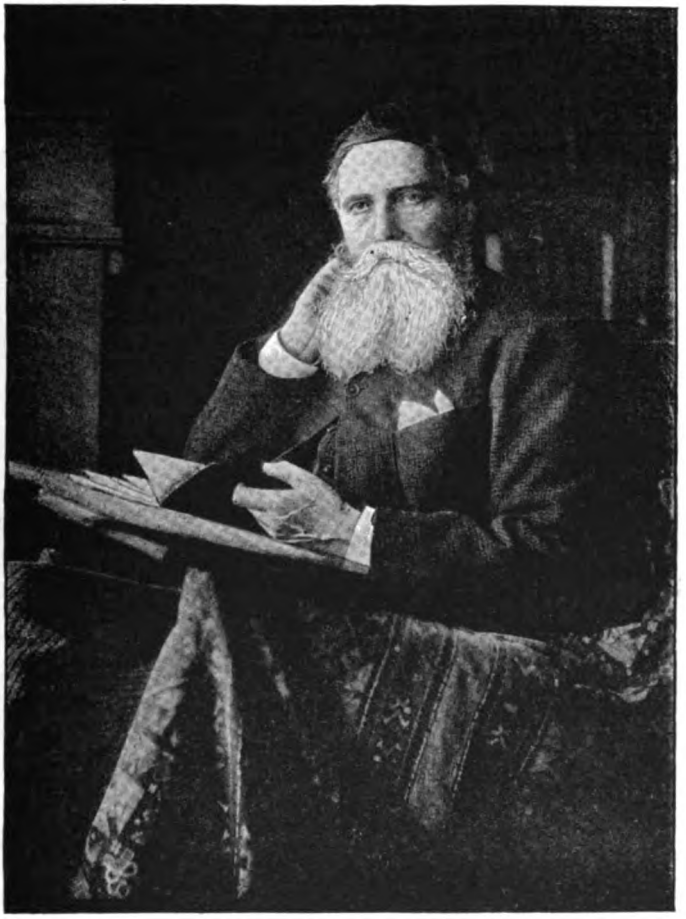
the heroic coxswain of the Ramsgate boat, a lion-like as well as lion-hearted man, who rescued hundreds of lives from the fatal Goodwin Sands during his career. In like manner, when getting up information for "The Lighthouse," I obtained permission from the Commissioners of Northern Lights to visit the Bell Rock Lighthouse, where I hobnobbed with the three keepers of that celebrated pillar-in-the-sea for three weeks, and read Stevenson's graphic account of the building of the structure in the library, or visitors' room, just under the lantern. I was absolutely

THE STUDY.

a prisoner there during those three weeks, for no boats ever came near us, and it need scarcely be said that ships kept well out of our way. By good fortune there came on a pretty stiff gale at the time, and Stevenson's thrilling narrative was read to the tune of whistling winds and roaring seas, many of which latter sent the spray right up to the lantern and caused the building, more than once, to quiver to its foundation.

In order to do justice to "Fighting the Flames" I careered through the streets of London on fire-engines, clad in a pea-jacket

and a black leather helmet of the Salvage Corps. This, to enable me to pass the cordon of police without question—though not without recognition, as was made apparent to me on one occasion at a fire by a fireman whispering confidentially, "I know what *you* are, sir, you're a hamitoor!"



MR. R. M. BALLANTYNE.

"Right you are," said I, and moved away in order to change the subject.

It was a glorious experience, by the way, this galloping on fire-engines through the crowded streets. It had in it much of the excitement of the chase—possibly that of war—with

the noble end in view of saving instead of destroying life! Such tearing along at headlong speed; such wild roaring of the firemen to clear the way; such frantic dashing aside of cabs, carts, 'buses, and pedestrians; such reckless courage on the part of the men, and volcanic spoutings on the part of the fires! But I must not linger. The memory of it is too enticing. "Deep Down" took me to Cornwall, where, over two hundred fathoms beneath the green turf, and more than half-a-mile out under the

THE DRAWING ROOM.

bed of the sea, I saw the sturdy miners at work winning copper and tin from the solid rock, and acquired some knowledge of their life, sufferings, and toils.

In the land of the Vikings I shot ptarmigan, caught salmon, and gathered material for "Erling the Bold." A winter in Algiers made me familiar with the "Pirate City." I enjoyed a fortnight with the hearty inhabitants of the Gull Lightship off the Goodwin Sands; and went to the Cape of Good Hope, and up into the interior of the Colony, to spy out the land and hold intercourse with "The Settler and the Savage"—although I am bound to confess

that, with regard to the latter, I talked to him only with mine eyes. I also went afloat for a short time with the fishermen of the North Sea in order to be able to do justice to "The Young Trawler."

To arrive still closer at the truth, and to avoid errors, I have always endeavoured to submit my proof sheets, when possible, to experts and men who knew the subjects well. Thus, Capt. Shaw, late chief of the London Fire Brigade, kindly read the proofs of "Fighting the Flames," and prevented my getting off the rails in matters of detail, and Sir Arthur Blackwood, financial secretary to the General Post Office, obligingly did me the same favour in regard to "Post Haste."

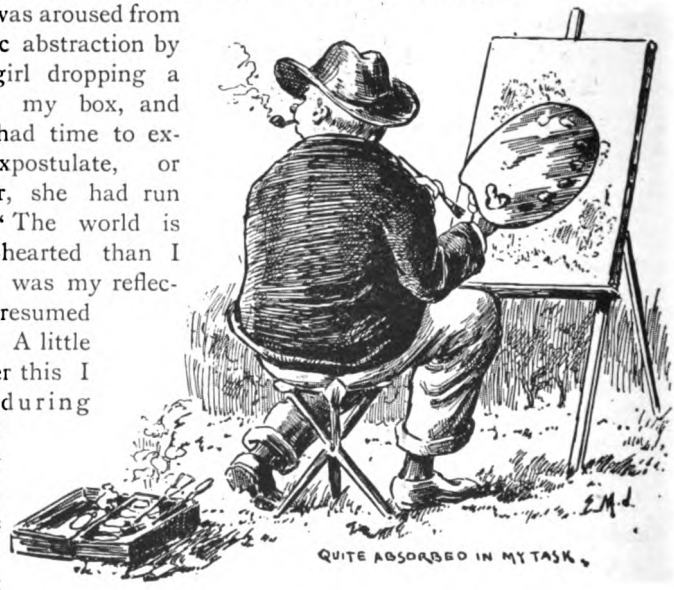
One other word in conclusion. Always, while writing—whatever might be the subject of my story—I have been influenced by an undercurrent of effort and desire to direct the minds and affections of my readers towards the higher life.

Trials and Troubles of an Artist.

By Fred Miller.

Illustrations by E. M. Jessop.

ARE any professional men so liable to public insults as painters? Only last summer a new, and I think unique, type of insult was dropped upon me. I had a picture in hand, and wanted a bit of background to complete it. I had seen just the very thing near Twickenham, so, taking my sketching-box and camp-stool, I trained out, and in due course started work. Although I was painting by the side of a public road, the traffic was small and the passers-by few. Still there *were* passers-by, mostly children, with their nurses or governesses. I am too used to being looked at to take any notice of those who try to peep as they pass, and I soon got quite absorbed in my task. Presently, I was aroused from my artistic abstraction by a little girl dropping a penny in my box, and before I had time to explain, expostulate, or thank her, she had run away. "The world is less hard-hearted than I thought," was my reflection as I resumed painting. A little while after this I noticed, during the pauses of my work, another little girl hovering about



me in an undecided sort of way. After a few moments' indecision, *she* dropped a penny in my box and disappeared. "This is encouraging," I said to myself, "I shall certainly come here again."

DROPPING A PENNY IN MY BOX.

I resumed my sketch, when presently a young girl with two children came and stood near me. These were of a different class. There was no timidity or reticence about them. After standing at my side, and finding that they could not see to advantage, the three sidled round to the back, and gradually edged themselves nearer and nearer until they commanded a satisfactory view of the sketch. They watched in silence for awhile, and then the girl said—"You ain't done much yet. 'Spose you're going to finish it at 'ome?"

The tone of her voice made me inclined to humour her, so I replied—

"Well, you see, miss, I haven't taken enough yet. Can't afford to go home on twopence."

"*My* brother paints. He's in the sixth standard. I give 'im a box of paints on his birthday, and he's going to paint me a picture for my bedroom."

"YOU AIN'T DONE MUCH YET."

The gulf that *might* have divided us was bridged now, so I got what satisfaction I could out of her chatter.

"I wish I could paint. I'd like to do them tex's what they gives yer at Sunday school."

"Oh, that's the line you'd like to take up, Julia, is it?"

Another pause.

"MY BROTHER PAINTS."

"D'yer like them paintin's what they gives yer at the tea grocers? My brother says 'e's going to paint them sort when 'e gets them colours what you squeezes out of tubes; you know, like them ladies' tormenters, same as you gets on Bank 'olidays on 'Ampstead 'Eath."

I wanted to go on with my picture, so I suggested to Julia (I had no reason to suppose that her name was not Julia) that it was getting near tea-time.

"Oh, is it," she said; "come along, Halbert." Then, turning to me, she added—"Are yer comin' to-morrer? I'd like yer to see my brother's paintin's."

"That depends upon how much I make to-day, Julia," I answered—"whether the 'pitch' is a good one or not."

"Oh," said Julia, thoughtfully; "I'd like yer to come to-morrer," and then as she passed she dropped a halfpenny into my box.

BANK 'OLIDAYS ON 'AMPSTEAD 'EATH."

On other occasions, when out painting in poor neighbourhoods, my easel, camp-stool, and self have been used as "home" in games like "Hi-spi hoy" and "Hoop," and I have, during the progress of my sketch, been more than once in imminent danger of being carried away, and my kit sent flying, during a sudden rush of the excited players.

But even such an indignity as this does not touch bottom. Boys have before now made me a "Harbour of Refuge," with the poetry left out, and bricks and various missiles substituted. They have dodged behind me to escape the consequences of "cheekiness" to bigger boys, and have used my canvas as a screen to shield off stones.

And what are you to do? Just at that moment, in all likelihood, you are putting in a crisp, telling touch that will "do the trick," and if the news were brought to you that your favourite aunt had fallen downstairs, it would not be sufficient to make you rise from off your camp-stool.

"Hi-spi-Hoy"

I was sketching once near a row of those cheap one-storied cottages, generally called Villa This and Villa That, inhabited by a tribe the mothers of which seem always to have a baby on hand, and several others in various stages of development. These children spend most of their time, so far as I can judge, in hanging about, just outside the front garden, waiting for something to turn up to amuse them, and I had been much bothered by their creeping round behind me, or edging closer and closer to my side, and occasionally shoving each other so as to shake me or my sketch. I tried to forget them, and maintained a chilling silence. The numbers, however, kept on increasing, and presently games were projected in my immediate vicinity, as though I were the centre of gravity, or the hub of the universe. The climax was reached when a young nurse, aged seven or thereabouts, with a child just on the brink of independence in her arms, came up and said—

"D'yer mind me leaving my baby here, while I have a game with the Tubbses? She'll be all right if I sit her on your jacket."

Nice thing when seeking material for a masterpiece for next year's Academy to be asked to look after baby!

The remarks made by street loafers and errand-boys, too, who

stand at your elbow for half-an-hour at a stretch, are not encouraging, as a rule. One boy, in what he considers a tone of confidence, will say to another—

"S'elp me, Bob, aint 'e a doin' it a fair treat."

"Carry me out" (it is impossible to write "out" as *they* pronounce it), "'Arree, ain't it fine" (rising intonation on the "I")—"I wish I wos a bloomin' hartist."

"Don't 'e fancy 'isself, just."

"D'YER MIND ME LEAVING MY BABY HERE?"

It is difficult to keep quietly on at work with every appearance of indifference under such circumstances. It is also exasperating to be called "Matey," as though you were a pal of theirs, and lived on the same landing. Yet these are only a few of the indignities with which a poor artist has to put up. Who has not, when on a sketching tour, felt the contempt that the bucolic mind has for a man who, day after day, and week after week, sits out of doors on his camp-stool, doing his best to catch some of Nature's mystery and fleeting beauty, and give it an abiding place on his canvas.

My friend S—— is a big, healthy, bearded fellow, who looks as though he could pick half-hundred weights up in each hand with the ease that I pick up my palette. The following dialogue took place on one occasion between him and an elderly rustic who had been standing watching him for some time, as he sat by the roadside, painting.

AINT 'E A DOIN' IT A FAIR TREAT."

"No offence, sir," said the agriculturist, "but is anything the matter wi' yer?"

"No," answered S——. "What makes you ask?"

"Yer hain't lame, are yer?"

"Lame! Good gracious, no!"

"You hain't 'ad a misfortune in any way? The sciatics or lumbager, that's kind o' laid yer by?"

"No, I'm as well as I have always been."

"An' yer call yerself a man and can sit theer a doin' o' that. Well, I'm d——d!"

"YER HAIN'T LAME, ARE YER?"

I never go out sketching without feeling this silent contempt, for it is only rarely that it finds expression. The remarks made by villagers show how utterly unable they are to grasp the idea of anyone valuing an artist's efforts. The old story of the painter who was asked by the farmer whose cow he had been drawing, what the said picture might be worth when finished, is typical.

"Oh, I hope to get thirty pounds for it if it is well hung," explained the artist.

WHOSE COW HE HAD BEEN DRAWING.

"Thutty pound for the mere picture!" cried the old fellow in astonishment. "Why, I'd sell you the old cow itself for ten."

A spirit of commiseration underlies a good many of the remarks made by the bucolic. I went down on one occasion to see a couple of painters who had taken a small cottage at one and sixpence a week in order to paint some orchard pictures. When their neighbours, who were farm hands, got to know them a bit, they were very friendly disposed, and made them presents of vegetables, and one old fellow who was reputed to have "saved a

smart bit o' money," said to one of the "painter chaps," as they were called—

"There don't seem much of a living in your business, sir. I s'pose trade's a bit dull with ye, now folks is a spring cleaning. What do yer say now to paintin' my cart in yer dinner hour? I shall want it done afore long, and I'd like to gie ye the job, for a shilling or two down't come amiss to any of us. Do it now?"

WHAT DO YER SAY NOW TO PAINTIN' MY CART

Another job refused by these same artists was to clean and touch up an old picture that had been bought for a few shillings at a sale. The old chap who had purchased it went so far as to offer them a shilling to do the work, and that offer being declined, he threw in a pint of stout as an additional inducement.

STAYED TO STARE AT THE WORK.

A friend who had painted a 50 x 40 canvas outside during one summer, spending some five or six weeks upon it, told me that one old chap, who looked like a jobbing gardener, used to pass by every day, and invariably stayed to stare at the work, but always at a respectful distance, and it was not until the picture was nearly completed that he broke the silence.

"D'yer moind me 'aving a look at it, sir?"

"Oh, certainly not," and my friend got off his camp-stool to let the critic have an uninterrupted view. The subject was a careful study of wild flowers and herbage, growing in the corner

of an orchard. The old fellow seemed to take the picture in very carefully, and at length said:

"Is it a view in Ireland, sir?"

"View in Ireland! What made you think of that? Don't you see it's the corner of the orchard there, with all the thistles and docks and wild flowers?"

"Well, to be sure! Fancy anyone a paintin' them weeds and trumpery!" and with that cheerless remark the old fellow sheered off.

MODELLING A MILKMAID.

Sculptors, unlike painters, rarely venture out of their studios, but it happened that a sculptor came down to spend a few days with us when in a Norfolk village, and so liked the place that he hired a barn, had a lot of clay and a turntable sent down, and started modelling a milkmaid. As the work progressed, it became the talk of the place, and, in due course, numbers came to see the clay image that my friend was setting up in the barn. This work *did* appeal to them. They could see at a glance what it was meant to represent, and the chorus of approval was loud and general, except on the part of the village constable. He was a taciturn man, and used to come and smoke his pipe and preserve a contemptuous silence. One day he said—

"Are you making that image for a church?"

"No. Why did you think I was?"

"Oh, nothing. Only when I was in London, and that's a smart while ago, I worked on a church as was a buildin', and we had to fix some figures; only they were made in what we calls Portland cement."

NUMBERS CAME TO SEE THE CLAY IMAGE

"Oh, then, you have seen sculpture before?"

"Yes, sir, 'tain't the first time as I've seed a graven image, as the Bible calls 'em. D'yer ever make them figures they puts over doors and winders of houses?"

"No; I can't say I do."

"Did you ever see them two figures in the Lord Mayor's palace in the City? You *ought* to see them, sir. I reckon they're the best things in that line you can see anywhere?"

"I'm afraid I don't remember which figures you refer to."

"Oh, they ain't like your work, not a little bit. They're picked out in all kinds of colours, and are ever so big. I was thinking they must represent two of them heathen gods what the Children of Israel fell down and worshipped. You know the figures I mean?"

"I'm afraid I don't. Can't you remember their names?"

"Why, Gog and Magog, aren't they, sir?"

THE VILLAGE CONSTABLE.

The Brothers' Agency.

By Do Bahin.

Illustrations by The Misses Hammond.

"SHE WON'T SEE YOU."

"SHE won't see you, my boy," said Grigsby, as I stood on the steps of the Scandalmongers' Club waiting for the next West Kensington 'bus; "she's doing a roaring trade, and don't want any more advertisements; and if she does she'll put up her own notices, and not use you for billsticker."

"Grigsby may not be right this time," I reflected, as I scaled the 'bus. "He seldom is! And haven't I triumphantly interviewed all the most unmanageable celebrities of the last ten years, from Lord Tennyson to the Royal baby? I suppose it's my bland appearance. It lulls suspicion and excites curiosity. People want to see whether it is possible for any man to *be* such a fool as I *look*. Anyhow, I must go through with it now, as I've let it out to Grigsby."

The fact is, I was about to try to interview Miss Jenny T. Buller, the inventress and manager of the "Brothers' Agency," perhaps the most important social factor of the present century. In due course I found myself opposite a smart-looking house, on whose door-plate was engraved "The Brothers' Agency."

Being taken no doubt for a postulant Brother, I was shown upstairs into a severe but elegant room, in the middle of which, at a huge desk loaded with papers, sat a fashionable young lady of the frailest type of Transatlantic beauty.

"Miss Buller, I believe."

"You will not suit," she said, after one short but decisive stare. "You are not up to our mark."

"I don't wish to be a Brother," I replied.

"Then what do you want?" she answered.

"Miss Buller," I inquired, as if my life depended on the response, "how did you ever think of this wonderful scheme?"

She laid down her pen, and turned in her chair; and I saw that I had won.

"I'm tired of writing just now," she began, "and I don't mind if I tell you.

"I found myself obliged to increase my income by some means. I first thought of starting a servants' agency; but the inconvenience I experienced from having no brothers to take me about suggested a novel idea to me. I was wondering if other girls felt as I did, when it flashed upon me that young men who, from any reasons, are in want of money, might let themselves out as brothers to well-to-do damsels possessing no fraternal relations. I immediately settled to start an agency for this object—somewhat on the principle of 'Lady Guides'—the full title being 'The agency for supplying Brothers to brotherless girls, or those with unobliging brothers.' I resolved to call it shortly 'The Brothers' Agency.' It is a good name, and gives to the undertaking a kind of monastic flavour that I find is very taking.

"'I DON'T MIND IF I TELL YOU.'"

"Of course I only began in a small way amongst the men and girls I knew personally; but my business spread so rapidly that I soon started a regular office, and issued printed rules.

"I decided that the Brothers should go to their work during the day (as such relations do), and only be engaged for the evening to escort my clients, as their sisters, to balls, theatres, etc. I knew that young men in London society were supposed to let themselves out for dances; so why not as Brothers?"

"Why not, indeed?" I murmured sympathetically.

"We do not find," she continued vivaciously, "that it leads to matrimonial complications, as the men who seek employment as Brothers are usually so very impecunious that they understand that marriage is out of the question for them. I was told by my friends, by which I mean all those who felt themselves privileged to say nasty things to me, that we should degenerate into a matrimonial agency, but I have not found it so. On the contrary,

every man entering his name on our books, and every girl engaging a Brother, signs a paper agreeing to pay a large prohibitive fine should they get engaged to each other during the period of fraternity. Any man known to be engaged is obliged to take his name off the books *at once*, as we find *fiancées* very prejudiced, and

"ONE SISTER WAS SEEN AT THE THEATRE BY AN OLD MAIDEN AUNT."

several unpleasant visits were paid to me at the office. Any man becoming engaged while fulfilling a contract is liable to instant dismissal at the employer's pleasure, it having been found that he almost invariably becomes remiss and inattentive in his discharge of duties.

o o

"Of course, till the significance of the title of 'Brother' became generally known in London society, there arose a good deal of scandal and confusion.

"One sister was seen at the theatre by an old maiden aunt, who had never heard of the Agency. The young lady offered as an explanation that the man with her was 'only engaged for the time,' which so shocked the poor old lady that she made a codicil next day to her will reciting her niece's misbehaviour and disinheriting her."

"That kind of misunderstanding," I said, "can hardly occur any longer."

"I should think not," she retorted. "And meantime, thank goodness, the term 'Brother' has put an end to that hackneyed form of refusal, 'I love you as a brother.' The sisters are only allowed to require the attention of the Brothers for a stated number of nights a week, and the work is well paid. On the other hand, the sisters escape all the duties they generally have to perform for their real brothers, such as practising accompaniments, mending, shopping, or running messages.

"MENDING."

"Brothers are engaged by the week; but I always recommend that the same Brother should not be retained for more than a month, as too long a service makes them—like old family servants—presume, and fancy themselves invaluable."

"And how do you manage about characters?" I here enquired.

"I never," she said, "consent to act as agent for any man I have not seen, or to procure a Brother for any girl I have not talked to; and I study their characters so as to know how any arrangement is likely to answer. We often have photographs of Brothers ready for engagement—in fact, those who keep their names permanently on the books usually supply us with cabinet pictures for reference, and I arrange for interviews as between mistresses and servants."

"And what terms are generally asked by the Brothers?" I said.

"These, of course," she replied, "depend largely on the nature of the situation, and the qualifications of the Brother.

Vulgar or disagreeable girls have to pay very heavily. Families with several girls are charged more in proportion, as many men object to go where other Brothers are kept. Some men are willing to go as joint Brother to a family of girls, but this rarely works well.

"They are paid so much a week, and their theatre money if they have to escort the lady to the play (like beer money, you know). One man required his buttonhole bouquets, but I said he was clearly above his place. We do not arrange any engagements for the summer vacation, as we have found it too dangerous. I really think," she added thoughtfully, "that the best way of explaining our methods to you would be to show some entries in our books."

"KNOWS ALL THE NEWEST STEPS"

"I should be deeply interested," I answered, stifling my eagerness, "and it would be very kind of you."

She drew a great ledger towards her, and showed me one or two entries. The first ran as follows:

"'A Brother, six feet high; dresses well; aristocratic manners; a good dancer, and knows all the newest steps, including the Pas de Quatre; obliging, and good-tempered; a teetotaller, and only smokes the best tobacco. Has the highest credentials from his last place. Available for "Church Parade" on Sunday, but prefers not to attend church previously, as he cannot get up so early.'"

"What a paragon!" I exclaimed.

"Ah! but he asks a very large salary," she rejoined; "he is so much sought after. This is a less expensive one—

"'A Brother, aged 27, something in the City; bad figure, but pleasant smile, and amusing to talk to; slightly provincial, but very highly educated; *most* respectable and steady; musical, and a good tennis player. Very few private engagements, and therefore available most days of the week. Charges strictly moderate.'

"We have one man on the books who owns a dogcart," resumed Miss Buller. "He is in the Guards, and preferred to earn a little money to being obliged to leave his regiment. I need hardly say that his charges are very high."

"Naturally," I murmured.

"Here is an advertisement addressed to young ladies of a religious turn of mind:

"'A young curate, who has a conscientious objection to bazaars, would be glad to augment his income (the money to be devoted to charitable objects) by obtaining employment as a Brother. He does not dance himself, but would give the sanction of his presence to such entertainments any day except Friday. He is fond of tennis and a good oar. He will give assistance to any lady district-visiting, or taking a Sunday-school class in his own parish. He prefers, as the object is a charitable one, leaving the question of salary to the sister's own good feeling.'

"A YOUNG CURATE."

"You wouldn't believe," said Miss Buller, "what a run there is on him; but I find I can easily supply every kind of variety now. A barrister, on this next page, suggests that, as he has influential legal connections, he can generally procure for his sister an excellent place at the sensational trials that have become so fashionable for ladies to attend! He commands a huge salary, especially being a gifted conversationalist, and taking the charge of a dinner table brilliantly; he has credentials from his last place for being 'witty without vulgarity.'"

"And now," I said, "I should like to see the sort of advertisement used by ladies needing Brothers, if you would be kind enough to show me one."

"They are not so interesting," she replied, "but here is one I received to-day:

"'A Brother is required during the hunting season by two sisters. He must be a good rider, capable of giving a lead, but very obliging, as two Brothers have been parted with lately, owing to over-excitement in the field causing them to neglect their sisters. The Brother will be mounted by the ladies' parents.'".

"Don't you find that disputes arise," I asked, "between Brothers and their employers? I should have thought the

position might become irksome to a young man, if the sister was unpleasant."

"Of course," she answered pensively, "an ill-tempered girl can make matters very unpleasant; but such people pay very highly, as I pointed out only yesterday to one of our most promising Brothers. 'She is rather a common girl,' I said, 'but you know you were very unlucky at Newmarket lately; and you sit up incessantly playing poker; and if you take my advice you will make your losses good by sticking to your place. I dare say the theatres are rather trying, but, on the other hand, as you don't go into at all the same society that she does, you are not likely to meet anyone you know at the parties she takes you to; and, of course, as her Brother, you need not dance incessantly with her!' He finally took my advice."

"AN ILL-TEMPERED GIRL CAN MAKE MATTERS VERY UNPLEASANT."

"Now that," I said, in my very stupidest manner, "is one of the difficulties which has occurred to me. A man who has been engaged as a Brother finds himself saddled with an undesirable acquaintance after the engagement is over."

"I should have thought," she replied, indignantly, "that you would have understood that neither the lady nor the Brother are expected to recognise each other when they meet after the termination of the engagement."

"It must be anxious work sometimes," I remarked, "settling the disputes that arise."

"It is, indeed," said Miss Buller. "One contract on the part of a rising young artist was actually broken off in the middle because the sister who had engaged him, an inordinately vain girl, insisted on being introduced as a central figure into his Academy picture for the year. He refused, and appealed to me; I supported him; on which the young lady came to the office and abused us both. My fear now is," she continued, "that Mr.

Whiteley will step in and 'provide' Brothers, but I feel sure that this business could only be managed successfully by a lady. A dispute arose last week over the question of a Brother being required to introduce any friends he might meet at a party to his sister. I vetoed this at once, as real brothers often decline to do this, unless they consider their sister does them credit. On another occasion a Brother insisted on smoking a strong cigar in a cab, coming back from the theatre, saying that he was not accustomed to treat his sisters with ceremony."

"That was rude," I remarked; "but still I pity the men if they are engaged by very exacting sisters, because, after all, they are not real brothers."

"ABUSED US BOTH."

"Oh," said Miss Buller, "I admit that sometimes sisters do get troublesome. One situation I find very hard to fill: the Brothers complain of its being such a hard place, as the young lady is so unpopular that no men ever come to speak to her, and her idea of a Brother is a person who never quits your side in the Row, or elsewhere. The consequence is, that the wretched Brother never has a moment's relaxation. She pays very highly, however. You know, many men stipulate that, even if fulfilling engagements, they shall be free to attend race meetings. We are obliged to consider the Brothers, as I assure you the competition for our best ones is tremendous. They are engaged—like seats at the theatre—for weeks beforehand. I forgot to mention that they are paid less highly in the winter than in the Season."

"You are certainly doing an excellent work," I exclaimed,

growing bolder as I felt my copy was made; "and, if I could hire myself out as *your* Brother "—I paused expressively.

"I guess I don't need to hire," she replied gaily, "I find all the Brothers are willing to take me out for nothing."

"For love, and not for money "—I interrupted, bowing.

"When they are disengaged," she continued, laughingly. "Besides, being American, I don't need to call them Brothers."

"The Brothers have taste!" was my remark; and then I added, "I suppose the work nearly all falls on your shoulders?"

"Yes; that is inevitable. Arranging for engagements is nothing, but I find it necessary to make the Brothers refer all disputes to me, and delicate points arise. One arose last week, when a lady called upon her Brother to chastise an erring suitor, who had jilted her. However, I said at once that this was not included in his duties, as the offence was prior to his entering on his present Brothership."

"'FOR LOVE, AND NOT FOR MONEY,' —I INTERRUPTED."

"Well, I think you were quite right," I said; "but I'm afraid your position is not so enviable as I fancied at first. I shouldn't care myself to settle such delicate points."

"Nonsense!" she replied, "these are crumpled rose leaves. The agency is paying splendidly. I am making my fortune, and at the same time conferring a boon on society. Why there is no longer a dearth of partners at dances, as most girls bring a Brother. In fact, the agency is doing so well that I shall soon have to take larger premises."

"Well, Miss Buller," I said, taking up my hat, "I hardly know how to thank you for your courtesy and patience in answering all my questions. I now thoroughly understand the working of your excellent agency, and I am sure that it is a scheme that will continue to flourish."

"Till the Brothers form a Union, and go out on strike," replied Miss Buller gaily. "The demand already exceeds the supply!"

She rang the bell, and a neat parlourmaid showed me out.

As I walked away, I marvelled that this inspired scheme, which bids fair to revolutionise modern society, should be the fruit of one mind.

I also thought with pleasure of my next meeting with Grigsby.

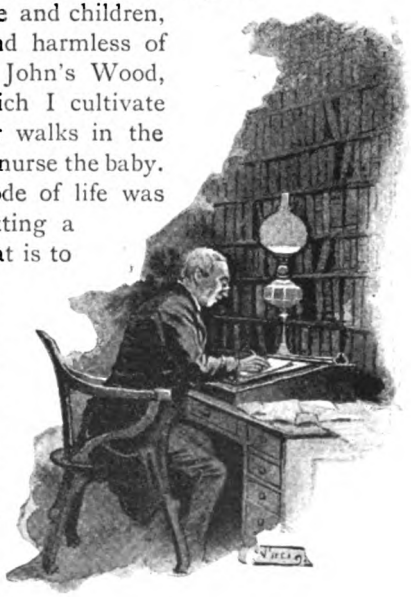
My Own Murderer.

By E. J. Goodman.

Illustrations by J. Greig.

WHEN I say that my name is Samuel Chillip, of course you will know who I am. Yes, I am the author—it has been said the famous author—of "The Poisoned Waterbottle," "Steeped in Gore," "The Demon Detective," and other highly sensational and blood-curdling stories. But though these tales of mine have brought me some fame and a fair amount of profit, I am not particularly proud of them. I really don't know how I, so to speak, drifted into crime. I never liked it, and, of course, never practised it myself. I would much rather have written sentimental or moral stories, but I seemed somehow fated to turn my attention to fraud and violence, and I could not get away from such subjects.

I am a family man with a wife and children, and live the most domesticated and harmless of lives. I rent a small villa at St. John's Wood, and have got a pretty garden, which I cultivate myself. I take my children out for walks in the Park, and have even been known to nurse the baby. Never was there a man whose mode of life was so different from his mode of getting a living. I burn the midnight oil, that is to say, I do my best work at night. The cares of a large family distract me so much that I can never concentrate my attention on my plots and situations in the daytime. It is only when the wife has retired, and the children, the darlings! are put to bed, that I can sit down quietly and develop my deeds of darkness.



"I BURN THE MIDNIGHT OIL."

Nothing out of the usual course had happened on the memorable evening of which I am about to tell, and which was destined to have so marked an influence on my literary career. I had had tea with my beloved Seraphina and our six children at seven o'clock, and afterwards we all sat

round the fire, and I told stories—stories not of crime and cruelty, but of good fairies and enchanted princesses, of boys and girls at school, and innocent loves and faithful lovers, which always started with "once upon a time," and ended with "happy ever after."

During the evening my little flock gradually melted away till nothing was left of it but my dear wife and our eldest girl, aged fourteen. At ten o'clock we supped off cold roast pork and rice pudding, with a little mild ale as a beverage, and then my beloved ones kissed me, wished me good night, and left me to my labours.

By half-past ten I was hard at work in my study, deep in the most critical chapter of my new story, "The Chemist's Revenge." I rather prided myself on the originality of the crime committed in this thrilling tale. The wicked hero had invented a hideous pill, compounded of ingredients which would explode within a human body and blow it to atoms. And now I was approaching the terrible scene in which the fatal dose was about to be administered to the hapless victim.

It was a quiet night; there was not a breath of wind even to stir the trees out of doors, and all was still within, save when a coal fell from the fireplace into the grate and the clock on my mantelpiece chimed the hour. Midnight had just struck, when my ears were suddenly startled and my heart set beating by a sound out of doors. It was that of a slow, heavy step, crunching the gravel of the garden path and coming nearer and nearer to my door. And then the footsteps ceased, and there was a knock—a single knock.

If I had made the flesh of my readers to creep in my time, now it was the turn of my own. No one had ever visited me before by night in this way. I could not imagine who it could be or what he—for it was the tread of a man that I had heard—could want.

I turned cold and shivered. But a moment's thought told me that after all it might be only a policeman, suspecting burglars, come to inquire why my light was burning, or it might be a "mistake."

So I went to the door and opened it without removing the chain.

"Who is there?" I asked.

Then a voice inquired, "Is this Mr. Samuel Chillip's?" It was a somewhat hoarse, gruff voice, but its tone was subdued and quiet. It threatened nothing unpleasant.

"Yes, I am Mr. Chillip," I said.

"Can I speak with you a moment?

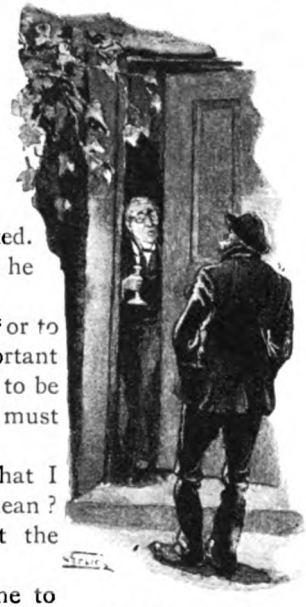
"About what? Who are you?"

"I am a stranger, and I cannot well explain my business here, but it is important and urgent."

This was said in so tranquil and respectful a manner as to allay any apprehension I might have felt, while exciting my curiosity. Still I hesitated. The stranger might be a beggar. But he anticipated my thought.

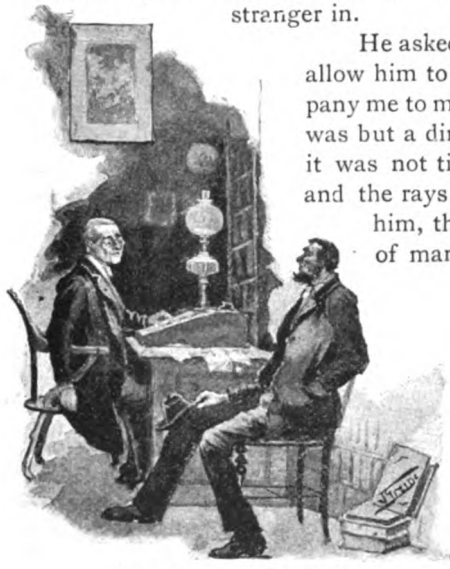
"I have not come to beg," he said, "or to trouble you in any way. I have an important communication to make to you, likely to be useful to you in your occupation, and it must be made at once or it will be too late."

Here was a mystery equal to many that I myself had invented. What could it mean? I was eager to know, and alas! let the stranger in.



"WHO IS THERE?"

He asked me to allow him to accompany me to my study, and I did so. There was but a dim light in the passage, and it was not till he had entered my room, and the rays of my lamp had fallen upon him, that I discovered what manner of man it was that I had rashly admitted.



"HE WAS A TALL, BIG MAN."

He was a tall, big man, with a hard, square face, and deep-set, glittering eyes, and his chin fringed with a round, shaggy beard, while he was attired in a rough pilot coat, and on his head he wore a broad-brimmed felt hat. He looked like a seafaring man, and was not a prepossessing person.

I asked him to take a seat, and seated myself in my round-backed writing chair beside my desk.

He had taken off his hat, and held it on his knee with his left

hand, while the other he buried in his capacious side pocket. I thought he was going to produce something, but he did not.

He merely opened a conversation, and I may say that the tone of his voice throughout was always as quiet, as calm, as subdued, as when he addressed me at the door.

"You are Mr. Samuel Chillip?" he asked, or remarked, again.

I bowed in reply.

"The author of 'The Poisoned Waterbottle' and other stories?"

"Yes."

"Tales of crime?"

"You may call them so."

"What do you know of crime?"

The question startled me. In the first place, it was an extraordinary one to ask under the circumstances, and in the next, it was not an easy one to answer.

"May I inquire," I said, "why you put this question?"

"Because I wish to know."

"For what purpose?"

"That you will discover presently."

The man had evidently an object in view, so I thought I would humour him.

"I have taken great interest in the subject," I said, "and have studied it in books and newspapers and in the courts of justice, and have also derived a good deal of information from persons who have come in contact with criminals."

"Ah! you know nothing of it from personal experience?"

"How do you mean?"

"You never, for instance, saw a murderer?"

"Only in the dock."

"Would you *like* to see a murderer?"

"Well," I replied, with a nervous laugh, "'like' is hardly the word. If I happened to come across such an individual, I should feel interested, no doubt."

"No doubt," this strangest of strangers echoed, adding, after a pause, "and you never saw a murder done?"

"Never."

"Would you *like* to see a murder done?"

This gruesome question almost startled me out of my chair.

"Good gracious!" I exclaimed, "certainly not."

"And yet you write about such things."

"That is quite a different matter. But you must excuse me

for saying that I do not understand the object of these questions. May I ask who you are?"

"I am a murderer."

My visitor said this in the calmest way, as though he were only calling himself a clerk or a carpenter.

"A murderer?" I gasped rather than asked.

"A murderer in intention only at present. I am going to do a murder, and I want you to witness it."

"I AM A MURDERER."

Good heavens! I looked at the stranger; I met his terrible wild eyes, and in a moment it flashed upon me that I was in the presence of a madman.

I started from my chair, and was about to rush to the bell and call for help, but the stranger put his left hand on my shoulder and kept me in my seat, while he drew his right hand from his coat pocket, and something glittered in the lamplight. Oh, horror! a bright, new, large, six-chambered revolver!

"Be still, be silent," he said, almost in a whisper, "or you are a dead man."

I need hardly say that I was quiet enough after this, and sat grasping my chair arms with both hands, and staring at the stranger, perhaps with my hair standing on end.

"SOMETHING GLITTERED IN THE LAMPLIGHT."

"I don't want to hurt you," the dreadful man went on, "unless I can get nobody better to kill. But I mean to kill someone to-night, and I want you to see me do it. You must come with me out into the streets, and go about with me until we find somebody worth killing. You must keep very quiet, utter no cry, give no alarm, excite no suspicion. Otherwise I shall shoot you dead on the spot. I would not mind killing you, the author of so many

stories of crime, but I would rather slay someone of higher social position, and leave you to live and record the deed."

I reflected that I should prefer this arrangement myself, but, still better, I would rather get out of the whole horrible business altogether. But the madman, as I regarded him, was imperative.

"Put on your hat and coat and come with me quietly," he said. "Make no noise or I fire."

It was a frightful situation, such as I had never conceived even in my wildest dreams, but what was I to do? In silence I attired myself for this terrible expedition. My companion made me precede him to the street door, opened it himself, and closed it quietly behind us.

Side by side in silence we walked, the maniac keeping half a step in my rear, and I knew all the while that he had his right hand in his side pocket. Now and then he indicated the way we should go, and then he led me across the Regent's Park, and so through street after street till we reached Hyde Park Corner. We passed several policemen by the way, but, unfortunately, none of them suspected or even particularly noticed us. I dared not give an alarm or attract attention, for did I not know that that dreadful hand was still in that dreadful side pocket?

Presently my companion paused, and said, as though speaking to himself:

"A member of the Royal Family would be best."

I was rather glad to hear this, because if he intended that an illustrious personage should be his victim he was likely to be disappointed. Royal Highnesses are not usually found walking about in the neighbourhood of their palaces at two o'clock in the morning.

Thus we rambled to and fro near Buckingham and St. James's Palaces and Marlborough House, need I say with no result? Not a single Prince was to be seen anywhere, and my companion seemed slightly disgusted.

"Hum!" he muttered. "They are hiding. Let us go now to Downing Street."

He evidently thought that, failing Royalty, his next best course would be to slay a Cabinet Minister. But neither the Premier nor any of the Secretaries of State happened to be abroad at that hour.

Our walk down Whitehall proving uneventful, the madman next suggested that we should "try the Houses of Parliament." Here the position seemed more dangerous. The House of

Commons could not have long adjourned—it was in the days of late sittings—and it was quite possible that some belated M.P. might be on his way home.

Presently, indeed, my companion made a remark that filled me with horror.

"That looks like one," he said. "Now steady."

An elderly, respectable-looking gentleman was approaching us, walking alone from the direction of the House, and my terrible associate was standing under a lamp-post still with his hand in his pocket.

My presence of mind, together with my faculty of invention, here happily came to my aid.

"Stay," I whispered; "mind what you are about, or you will make a mistake. That is not a member of Parliament. I know him by sight but not to speak to. He is a retail grocer who keeps a shop in Oxford Street."

"THAT LOOKS LIKE ONE."

"Are you quite sure?"

"Quite."

And so the elderly stranger passed us, little guessing what a narrow escape he had had.

The position was truly appalling. Now we neared the Royal Academy, at that time still situated in Trafalgar Square, and my would-be murderer muttered something about "picking off" an R.A. or an Associate. The wretched creature seemed well up in honorary titles. Next we wandered along the Strand, and he thought of destroying a distinguished actor, but the theatrical profession had doubtless long since gone to bed. Thank goodness he had not gone far

into the heart of Clubland, or he might have found there a victim worthy of his murderous weapon.

On, on he led me, past Temple Bar, not without an eye for wandering Judges and Queen's Counsel. Fortunately, at that hour, it was now about four a.m., the newspapers had all gone to press, and there were no eminent journalists about. Then he came to St. Paul's, and talked about archbishops, bishops and canons, and I almost laughed at the idea of our meeting a Church dignitary abroad at such a time.

"THEN HE CAME TO ST. PAUL'S."

Finally, we got into the heart of the City, and here I felt safe if he had any designs on the Directors of the Bank of England or members of the Stock Exchange.

It was in the middle of the deserted road opposite the Mansion House that he stopped at last, and cast a fond look at the residence of the Lord Mayor.

"He won't come out," he murmured; "none of them will, the cowards. Not even an alderman."

Then, after looking about him for a time—why, oh! why, were not the suspicions of some policeman excited by our strange proceedings?—he suddenly exclaimed, to my great joy:

"I am afraid it is no good. We shall have to give it up for to-night; they are all in hiding, every one of them. To be sure, I might pick off some stranger, and take my chance, but it is hardly good enough. I should waste myself."

This was the pleasantest speech he had yet made, but his next was not so agreeable.

"After all," he said, turning to me, "I don't think I could get anybody better than you. You are a rather distinguished novelist, and the fact that you write stories of crime would make it sound remarkable. What do you say?"

I was almost too frightened to say anything. I was trembling all over, for in a moment that dreadful hand might leap out of that dreadful pocket, and my fate would be sealed. But, happily, my imagination once more came to my aid.

"It is not a bad idea," I replied; "but I think you could do better. Don't be in a hurry—there are plenty of distinguished people about, but not at so late an hour as when you called on me last night. Come a little earlier to-night, say at ten o'clock, and we'll see if we can't find a Prince. I know them all by sight, and will point one out to you, a good one. Of course, if you can't get anybody better, you can shoot me."

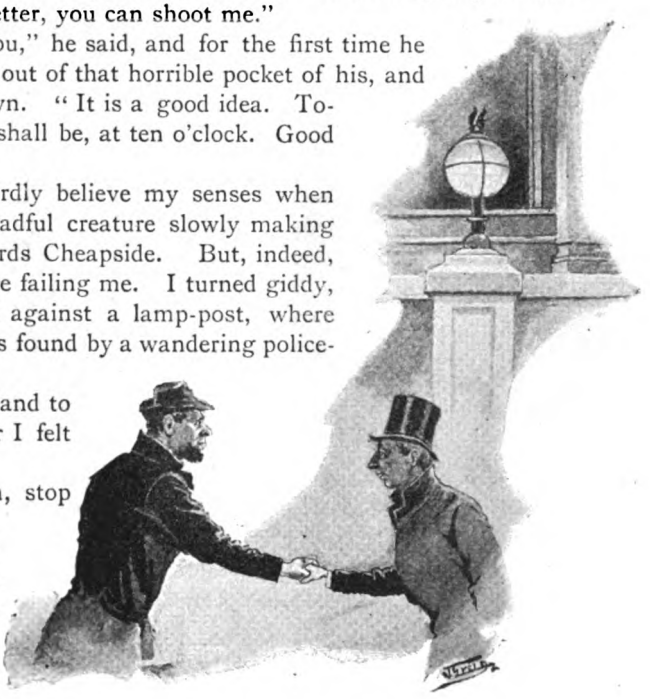
"Thank you," he said, and for the first time he drew his hand out of that horrible pocket of his, and grasped my own. "It is a good idea. To-night then it shall be, at ten o'clock. Good morning."

I could hardly believe my senses when I saw the dreadful creature slowly making his way towards Cheapside. But, indeed, my senses were failing me. I turned giddy, and staggered against a lamp-post, where presently I was found by a wandering policeman.

I put my hand to my throat, for I felt choking.

"Stop him, stop him!" I cried. "He has got a revolver—he is a murderer—he——"

But the miserable constable took no notice of my warning. He only took me by the arm, and, turning his bull's eye and a suspicious glance upon my countenance, said:



"'THANK YOU,' HE SAID."

"Here, you had better go home quietly, sir. I suppose you have been dining out rather late. Hi, hansom!"

And he bundled me into a cab, and took my name and address, and the next moment I was bowling along on my road to St. John's Wood.

It was nearly six in the morning when I arrived, and, fortunately, no one heard me when I let myself in with my latch-key.

My wife thought I had only been sitting up extra late at my

work, and I told her nothing of my night's adventure. But I summoned two able-bodied detectives to my aid, and they agreed to await with me the lunatic's second visit. My family supposed that the detectives had come to assist me in getting up a tale of crime, and I did not undeceive them. So I despatched them to bed at an earlier hour than usual, on the plea that I did not wish to be disturbed, and sat with my companions in the study watching for the madman.

"YOU HAD BETTER GO HOME QUIETLY, SIR."

Precisely at ten o'clock there was heard a heavy footstep on the gravel path without, and once more a knock—a single knock.

"He has come," we whispered.

We had duly arranged our "plan of campaign," and now proceeded to carry it out. The most stalwart of the detectives was to open the front door, and the other to hide behind it. My post was on the threshold of my study, where I was to stand as a "reserve."

The men were wonderfully prompt in executing their operations. The street door had hardly been opened when there was a scuffle and a heavy fall, accompanied by much growling and cursing, and then the unmistakable sound of the snapping of a pair of handcuffs.

"It's all right," said the detective who had been behind the door, "we have got him and his six-shooter too."

Whereupon he produced the very weapon with which the maniac had threatened me—the large, bright, new revolver. I identified it at once.

"I got it out of his side pocket quick as thought," said the man.

Good! And now I retired into my study while the other detective brought the stranger forward.

"What the devil are you fools about?" I heard him cry, as he entered, handcuffed, at the door.

The sound of his voice startled me. It was *not* that of my

visitor the night before. A single glance showed me that it was quite a different sort of person.

"Halloa!" I cried, "there is some mistake here. That's not the lunatic."

"Lunatic!" exclaimed the captured man, "I should think not indeed. It is you who are the lunatics. I am a policeman!"

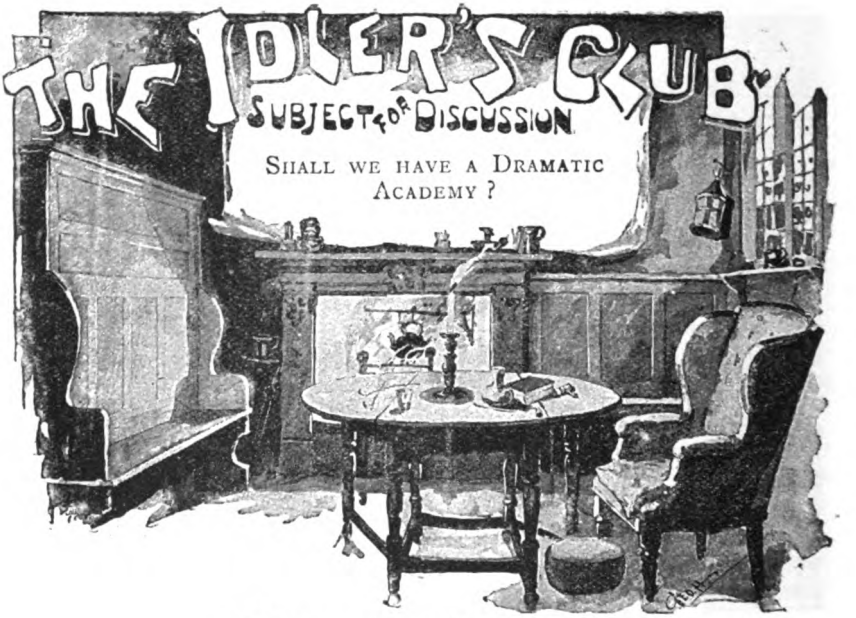
And a policeman he was—in plain clothes. He had come to tell me that the maniac was dead. He had shot himself almost immediately after leaving me, and the constable who had put me into a hansom remembered my words and my name and address. Hence I was now summoned to give evidence at the inquest.

"THERE WAS A SCUFFLE."

Of course the policeman was easily pacified, and, indeed, regarded his rough treatment by two of his own colleagues as a joke rather than otherwise.

I duly gave evidence at the inquest, but I am sorry to say that when I told my story it was not listened to quite so gravely as I thought it ought to have been.

So altogether this adventure rather disgusted me with the occupation I had hitherto been following, and now, for some time past, instead of composing tales of crime, I have gone in for writing moral stories for boys.



Miss Fanny Brough thinks that it is indispensable.

Of course, there will be the usual outcry that we don't want an Academy of British Dramatic Art because we have not had one hitherto; but there are many things wanted now-a-days which our forefathers had to do without. I don't say for a moment that the heads of the profession in England are not equal to those of France or other countries; it is the rank and file of whom I complain. They never get a chance of learning how to walk or talk properly on the stage, and, consequently, minor parts are frequently very badly played in English theatres. For instance, I went on the stage—in the provinces—just when the old system of stock companies was dying out. A few years before then it would have been possible to receive an admirable training in the provinces. But when I went on the stage, touring companies took possession of the land, and I had only two parts in eighteen months. What possible chance was there of learning to act under such a system? None at all. The result was that when I came to London, and had a comparatively good part offered me, I did not feel satisfied with the way I played it, and returned to the provinces. The difficulty, of course, is how to exist whilst qualifying for the stage. I maintain that a Dramatic Academy would do away with this difficulty, and tend to the improvement of British Dramatic Art in numberless ways. There are hundreds of inefficient teachers who profess to train people for the stage, although they themselves know nothing of the art of acting. As long as there are wealthy tyros mad to go on the stage at any cost, so long will inefficient teachers continue to flourish.

Of course, the Dramatic Academy would have to be subsidised, either by the Government or private individuals. The experiment is not a new one. It has been tried at the Paris Conservatoire, the National Dramatic Academy at Buda-Pesth, the theatrical school at Berlin, and the Dramatic Conservatoires in Vienna and Amsterdam. Surely it would be possible to collate the experiences of these various institutions and arrive at a basis on which to work. A committee of our leading actors and managers might be appointed to report on the matter. There is a great deal of nonsense talked about the heaven-born genius plunging into the first ranks of the profession at a bound, but, as a rule, the heaven-born genius requires a great deal of preparatory work to fit him for his profession. Mr. Grein, of the Independent Theatre, puts forward a very comprehensive plan for the working of such an academy. He proposes—(1.) The school should be open to children at thirteen. (2.) That they should pass a competitive examination. (3.) That the school should be divided into five classes, the three lower ones to be entirely preparatory. (4.) That the tuition for acting should not begin until these three classes are passed, or, in other words, that the pupil should spend four years in merely preparatory work. (5.) That if the pupil then shows no special aptitude, he should be recommended to give up all idea of the stage. (6.) That six hours a week should be bestowed on diction and acting. (7.) That at the end of the course the pupils should submit to a semi-public examination, and receive a diploma if proficient. (8.) That the co-operation of managers should be invited, and that the conduct of the school should be entrusted to one man (not an actor) under the supervision of three eminent actors or actor-managers. (9.) That the school must be endowed amply enough to tide it over the first five years of its existence, and that the fees to pupils should be made as low as possible. If a certain amount of energy and determination are brought to bear on the subject, I see no reason why it should not speedily be brought within the range of practical politics.

The Dramatic Academy must be subsidised.

* * * *

I am loath to say anything to discourage any scheme framed for the purpose of benefiting our art, but I cannot honestly say that, in my opinion, the establishment of a Dramatic Academy would, in any way, serve that purpose. The question was fully gone into by a most influential committee called together to consider the subject some ten years ago. It consisted of Mr. Irving, Mr. Boucicault, Mr. Bancroft, Mr. Vezin, Mr. Kendal, Mr. Neville, Mr. H. J. Byrne, myself, and many others. After a full discussion we found, amongst many other difficulties, it was quite impossible to find enough competent teachers who would undertake the work of instruction, so the matter fell through, and, as I do not believe in

Mr. John Hare thinks not.

the "blind leading the blind," I am convinced that any attempt to establish an English Dramatic Academy will prove abortive.

* * * *

Mr. J. L. Toole is not quite prepared to express a decided opinion.

I am not quite prepared to express a decided opinion on the matter. I am, however, more inclined to the view that a sound provincial training will always be found the more beneficial course.

* * * *

Mr. Edward Terry's experience.

I think it desirable, but scarcely practicable. Some years ago I was concerned in a scheme to promote the same object, my desire being that we should start by renting a small theatre, and playing a *répertoire* of pieces—that established actors should give their services for a minimum fee as professors, and when out of engagements should undertake to appear and act, taking less than their regular salaries. If the theatre or academy succeeded, and held its own for a year, I would then have asked for a Government subsidy. A great deal of good work was done some few years ago by the "Dramatic Students," and I regret exceedingly the society has ceased to exist.

* * * *

Sir Augustus Harris looks upon the idea as a myth.

What can I say? Of course, a Dramatic Academy would be a splendid institution, with all the best actors as masters teaching the young idea how to shoot—shoot straight, of course; and what a saving it would be to poor managers, who then could refer the thousands of aspirants for dramatic glory to it to become pupils and get prizes before asking for engagements. But alas! and alas!! where are the actors who will give their time and trouble to such a noble cause? I think our rough and ready way the only one suited to our peculiarities, and, therefore, look upon the idea as a myth.

* * * *

Miss Rose Norreys thinks it would be a difficult project.

An Academy of Dramatic Art, where each student must first win a diploma before being eligible for the stage, would be an inestimable advantage; but, unless this academy were founded and endowed by the "State," it would again prove to be impracticable. Moreover, as there is an universally accepted theory that the British public does *not want Art*, but merely demands to be amused, or to have its attention attracted (by some means or other), I fear it would be a somewhat difficult affair to induce the "State" to regard the proposition as anything but a trivial one.

Mr. William Terriss thinks there is no necessity.

I do not think the profession to which I have the honour to belong has any necessity for a Dramatic Academy. Actors and actresses have come, and are constantly coming, to the front who have learnt their business at the best of schools—the stage, which is always self-instructing. It is not so much a lack of ability (which is the cause of a seeming lack of artists) as opportunity.

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Cyril Maude thinks it necessary.

It seems to me that under the existing state of affairs, actors and actresses have to spend the best and most useful years of their life in a struggle to acquire a bare knowledge of the principles of their art. Could not the acquisition of this knowledge be aided and accelerated by a school in which, for reasonable terms, the beginner could learn the adjuncts of the art he has chosen, such as ease of carriage, how to speak properly (let us drop that misused word *elocution*, which only suggests the schoolgirl's recitation), fencing, production of voice, dancing, etc., not forgetting how to make up? *Then* let the tyro go into the provinces, where he must gain a certain amount of experience with constant change of theatres and of audience week by week. Who will say that this preliminary training would not be of enormous advantage to the beginner? *But* surely this school should not profess to teach *acting*, but the different arts and accomplishments which go to help to make the actor.

* * * *

Mr. Murray Carson is of opinion that the actor's own discretion should be his tutor.

I do not think a Dramatic College is either practicable or necessary. You could not expect the public, or the critics, to attend a series of performances given by novices; and as constant appearances in public must outweigh all other forms of teaching, it would be more profitable to the beginner to join a provincial *répertoire* company, and thus come into nightly encounter with his final judges, the public, thereby learning the most essential quality of the art—how to make his personality and his particular form or method the master of their feelings. Now, as the personality of every actor differs, so, I contend, must his method vary, not only in what is termed the "reading" of a part, but also in the technique of his execution. If to become a mere walking, talking machine, be the object of a beginner, by all means let him be instructed in calisthenics and elocution, and the art of first-night speech-making; but to call such a combination of classes a School of Dramatic Art is degrading; it robs the calling of its highest attribute—imagination. Innate ability must undoubtedly be developed, "which nobody can deny," but such an institution as is suggested would develop everything in the same form; and as there is no accepted standard to

aim at, the result would be, so many impressions of the mind of the teacher, who might possibly be wrong. It is impossible to talk about learning to "walk the stage," dancing, fencing, etc., etc., as being of sufficient importance to demand a national institution. I have known very fine actors who neither walked well nor spoke distinctly. A school *supported by the profession*, at which it would be possible for an actor to take lessons in any of these *accessories* from accredited masters, for a small fee, would be invaluable, but it could not by any possibility lay claim to the title "School of Dramatic Art." After a few general hints, which are not in the nature of an academical lecture, Shakespeare himself says, in that memorable address to the players, "But let your own discretion be your tutor." You cannot learn discretion, it must be the result of experience—an experience made up of hard work, many disappointments, self-analysis, and, above all, much patience.

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Cecil Raleigh does not believe in it.

I do not believe in an Academy of Acting, because I do not believe that the art of acting can be taught. The art of the actor is merely the faculty or instinct for simulation that everybody possesses in a greater or less degree. Every savage can simulate or imitate the cries of birds and beasts. Every savage can cover himself with a skin and stalk a herd of deer so disguised. But some savages do these things better than others. Every child, when it wants to thoroughly enjoy itself, plays at being something other than it really is. The girl takes a doll and plays at being a mother. The boy puts on a paper cocked hat and plays at being a soldier. We can all act more or less. Between Mr. Irving as *King Lear*, and the beggar who shivers on your door-step and swears that his wife and six children have not tasted food for a fortnight, the difference is one of degree, not of kind. The Pharisees of Scripture pretended to be what they were not, and got roundly denounced as hypocrites for their pains. As a fact, they were only incipient actors. The talk about teaching is, to my thinking, undiluted twaddle. The inherent desire to simulate grows, or it does not grow. You cannot make it grow. If a naturally awkward man can simulate the graces of a dancing master, if a naturally graceful man can simulate the limp of a cripple or the clumsiness of a hobbledehoy, if a comparative dwarf —like Kean—can assume the majesty of a monarch, then he is an actor. You may teach him to fence, and to dance, and to elocute till he is black in the face; you will never teach him to play "Othello" unless he is an actor. That fencing, dancing, and elocution are useful to the actor I do not deny. But if he is an actor he will pick these things up for himself easily enough under existing circumstances. A high development of the faculty for simulation necessarily implies a corresponding development in the faculty of observation. The actor sees, notes, and reproduces.

That is to say, he simulates. Moreover, being an artist, he only reproduces just so much as is necessary. He need not study anatomy, and walk a hospital, in order to indicate with a few graphic gestures the cripple's limp. Equally he need not be a superb swordsman in order to get through an effective stage combat. It is not absolutely essential that he should be elevated to the peerage before being permitted to play a duke. People talk about fencing, dancing, and elocution, as if actors had nothing to do but fence, dance, and spout. An actor has to simulate everything, from "shouts off" to a crowned king in the centre of the stage. As in all probability neither the unseen but angry shouters, nor the king, knew anything whatever of the acquirements alluded to, why should the actor bother about them? They do not help in the least. If he is an actor he can act. If he is not he can't. In the old days when an actor had to go before the curtain between the weary acts of an interminable tragedy and engage in a broadsword combat or dance a hornpipe, I can understand the necessity for his having to be a swordsman and a dancer. But I do not see the use of those accomplishments now. In these days a man need not, like Mr. Gilbert's "Jester,' always climb an oak to say "I'm up a tree." In these days we prefer the actor who thinks to the actor who dances. The institution of an Academy of Acting would do one thing, and one thing only. It would deluge an already overcrowded profession with a flood of mediocre automatons.

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Addison Bright says it depends upon the style of acting which is required.

Whether or no a Dramatic Academy be needed appears to me to depend on the kind of acting required. Do you affect the French school? Is your aching void filled by the exquisite elaboration, the delicacy, the half-tones, the subdued light and grey shadow, in which the French delight?—then, obviously, it were best to adopt the Conservatoire system, which hitherto has ensured these things being done better in France. "The proof of the pudding," and what better proof of the value of a Dramatic Academy could be forthcoming than the brilliant work of Coquelin, Febvre, Maubant, Delaunay, Got, Worms, Laroche, Blanche Barretta, Emilie Broisat, Madeleine Brohan? Here is a group of clever men and women. There is not a genius among them. The Bernhardts, Croizettes, Jane Hadings, and Mounet-Sullys, I purposely omit, as possibly unaffected by the argument. But of this band of "merely talented," there is not one but has by some means or other—and, in the first place, presumably, the method by which they were grounded in their art—become an artist, matured, solid, unapproachable. If, therefore, this be what you want, surely the Conservatoire system is the shortest cut to it. It is likely, however, that you, being English, want nothing of the kind. Kickshaws and daintiness are your aversion. The histrionic Roast Beef of Old England is your craving. You do not ask an

actor to merge or transform himself into the character he assumes, but simply to employ the author as a medium for the display of his own more or less striking individuality. In this case, schooling of any kind would, of course, be fatal. Teaching would only interfere with the development of that most precious possession, his personality. There is, indeed, only one way to help the actor of this class—a class numerous and highly popular in England and America—and that is by pointing out his faults. This, at first sight, seems a simple matter. His faults are generally multitudinous and glaring. But woe to the man who points the finger at them. He is merely qualifying for a species of martyrdom. The libel laws, reinforcing the instinct of self-preservation, forbid the critics doing it, and anybody else who tries is instantly regarded as a malignant private enemy of the criticised. Yet something in this direction ought to be done, for even actors recruited from the 'Varsities will murder the language, debase the currency of manners, mumble unchecked of "libery," and "Febuery," and "seckertery," and in many other barbarous ways betray the vulgarising influence of culture. Only one or two courses seem open to mitigate this evil—to end the harmful conspiracy of silence which fosters it. The establishment of such an academy as Miss Brough, Mr. Tree, and Mr. Alexander favour, if practicable (but where are the sufficiently eminent teachers to inspire confidence?) might do much; but better still would be an institution where not teaching, but criticism, real never-nowadays-practised criticism, was the object in view. And I think the best kind of institution for the simultaneous correction of faults and encouragement of promising talent would be a stock company, run at some big provincial theatre by a syndicate of London managers, who might there produce their London successes, turn and turn about, all the year round, and thus be brought into personal contact with the younger actors (who should be bound to them for a term of apprenticeship) impelled in their own interests to impart advice and admonition, and kept on the alert to discover genuine talent, and to snap it up when they saw it for their London houses.

* * * *

J. T. Grein goes into figures.

I have expressed my opinion on a Dramatic Academy in the *Daily Chronicle* some time ago, and have been promptly abused for it. Consequently, I am most firmly convinced that the reasons which I brought forward are sound. Nowadays, abuse is the highest form of approbation. There are just two little points on which I wish to touch just now, not in defence, but to explain. I mean that famous £50,000. It has been repeated that I want £50,000. I want them very much indeed, privately, but for the academy—*c'est autre chose*. All that I really want is that someone (the inevitable "someone," who plays such a star-part in our theatrical world) should lend a sum of £50,000 for five years, which should

be placed in a bank under trustees, and the usufruct of which should serve to maintain the establishment during its period of dentition, if I may call it so. After five years the capital would return to its owner, who would be none the poorer, while art would have been a great deal the richer for it. It is also insinuated that, because I opined that *one* man—not an actor—should stand at the head of affairs, I had clearly indicated who should be that man. I—of course! Such accusations of self-nepotism are a sign of the times. No one can speak disinterestedly about a subject now; we all must have a motive. We are all mercenary, we are automatic advertising machines of our own selves, we are always insincere. Charming! But for my own part, I wish to state it very plainly that I never have thought, or could think, of putting my own candidature forward if ever the academy should become a fact. I have no desire to fill such a post, an Englishman born should do it: it is a national affair. One thing should not deter us from advocating the academy. I refer to the failure of the former school. All I know about it is from hearsay, but it must have been a most miserable business, and if half the tales which are in circulation about the management are true, it was fit for anything except education. The radical and principal fault of the old school was that it had too many heads and not one competent ruler. Big names alone will not accomplish the work, and large committees are the most troublesome spoke in the wheelwork of any machinery. The former draw the money and the latter spend it. When the funds had dried up the whole thing collapsed. And what had it done? Nothing, absolutely nothing of any importance, nothing which could not have been done better and cheaper. Let this precedent be a warning. Let us have patrons by all means, a legion of titles and lions, for they may prompt munificence. But let the reins be in competent hands: one director and three guardians (selected from the patrons), who should keep a watchful eye on the management of the school. As for the *raison d'être*, the working, the subject of a national Dramatic Academy, I have no more to say at this juncture. My plan will be found summed up by Miss Brough. I hold that it is practical.

* * * *

Jerome wishes to educate the Playgoer.

I think the establishment of a Dramatic Academy would be of immense benefit to the stage. Whether such an institution would be of practicable service in teaching actors and actresses the rudiments of their art—whether it is advisable that they should be taught —whether it is possible to teach them—are debatable questions that I will not here enter upon. But such an institution would achieve a much more important and lasting result. It would educate the British Playgoer. At present this individual is most lamentably ignorant concerning all things connected with the theatre. He understands neither drama nor acting. To him the play is not an art, but an entertainment. He does not yet know

enough about the matter to dissociate the player from the part. He speaks not of *Hamlet* as portrayed by Mr. H. Irving, but of Mr. Irving as *Hamlet*, which sounds the same thing, but isn't. The following conversation is not invented, but recollected. I heard it in an omnibus. Said the lady next to me to the lady opposite: "How did you like Hare?" "Oh, not at all," replied the other, "I thought him a horrid man—so nasty to his mother." "Oh, yes," said the first speaker, "you saw him in *Robin Goodfellow*, didn't you? Oh, it isn't fair to judge him by that. You go and see him in *The Spectacles*. He's a *dear* old gentleman." No doubt the second lady will take the next opportunity of seeing Mr. Hare in *The Spectacles*, and will be delighted to notice how greatly he has improved. That this is the general attitude taken up by the public towards its stage servants is proved by the fact that no favourite actor can play an unsympathetic part with impunity. To "name" would be dangerous, but reflect for a moment upon the many plays—good plays—that have failed in recent years simply because the beloved actor-manager has been cast for the part of an objectionable person.

* * * *

Thinks it can be done.

In the interests of playwriters and play-actors, I wish to see the playgoer—our dramatic lawgiver—educated; and I think this might be done by means of a "Royal Dramatic Academy." Our Royal Academy of Art has been the means of bringing into existence an artistic public, which, if small, is at all events growing and enthusiastic; and a man can paint a picture with the certainty that some, at all events, of the people who come to look at it will be capable of comprehending his meaning. Without our Royal Academy of Music it is probable that *Ta-ra-boom-de-ay* would represent the high-water mark of our national taste. With the advent of a "Royal Dramatic Academy" (the "Royal" printed fairly large) people would begin to grasp the idea that acting was an art. A public would grow up able to appreciate a play as a play, and not merely as a digester or a pick-me-up; playwriting would not be the lottery it is; and the actor, no longer a mere public pet, would receive more dignified recognition as an artist. In France, in Germany, in Austria, in Holland, there are dramatic schools, and acting is regarded as an art. In England, keeping a theatre is supposed to be on all fours with keeping a shop. I should be sorry to add to the dustheap of rubbishy talk about Art, but thought and emotion, though it is legitimate to live by them, are not on all fours with other merchandise. An artist has a right to sell what he may possess of them, but he has no right to adulterate them to suit the taste of his customers. Something is needed to come between the drama and the entertainment-seeking public—something that shall, on the one hand, foster a purer taste, and, on the other, support and encourage a higher aim. I think a Dramatic Academy might accomplish this. If not, I know of nothing that would.

THE VENGEANCE OF HUND.

The Woman of the Saeter.

By Jerome K. Jerome.

Illustrations by A. S. Boyd.

WILD-REINDEER stalking is hardly so exciting a sport as the evening's verandah talk in Norroway hotels would lead the trustful traveller to suppose. Under the charge of your guide, a very young man with the dreamy, wistful eyes of those who live in valleys, you leave the farmstead early in the forenoon, arriving towards twilight at the desolate hut which, for so long as you remain upon the uplands, will be your somewhat cheerless head-quarters.

Next morning, in the chill, mist-laden dawn you rise; and, after a breakfast of coffee and dried fish, shoulder your Remington, and step forth silently into the raw, damp air; the guide locking the door behind you, the key grating harshly in the rusty lock.

For hour after hour you toil over the steep, stony ground, or wind through the pines, speaking in whispers, lest your voice reach the quick ears of your prey, that keeps its head ever pressed against the wind. Here and there, in the hollows of the hills, lie wide fields of snow, over which you pick your steps thoughtfully, listening to the smothered thunder of the torrent, tunnelling its way beneath your feet, and wondering whether the frozen arch above it be at all points as firm as is desirable. Now and again, as in single file you walk cautiously along some jagged ridge, you catch glimpses of the green world, three thousand feet below you; though you gaze not long upon the view, for your attention is chiefly directed to watching the footprints of the guide, lest by deviating to the right or left you find yourself at one stride back in the valley—or, to be more correct, are found there.

These things you do, and as exercise they are healthful and invigorating. But a reindeer you never see, and unless, overcoming the prejudices of your British-bred conscience, you care to take an occasional pop at a fox, you had better have left your rifle at the hut, and, instead, have brought a stick, which would have been helpful. Notwithstanding which the guide continues sanguine, and in broken English, helped out by stirring gesture, tells of the terrible slaughter generally done by sportsmen under

his superintendence, and of the vast herds that generally infest these fjelds; and when you grow sceptical upon the subject of Reins he whispers alluringly of Bears.

Once in a way you will come across a track, and will follow it breathlessly for hours, and it will lead to a sheer precipice. Whether the explanation is suicide, or a reprehensible tendency on the part of the animal towards practical joking, you are left to decide for yourself. Then, with many rough miles between you and your rest, you abandon the chase.

But I speak from personal experience merely.

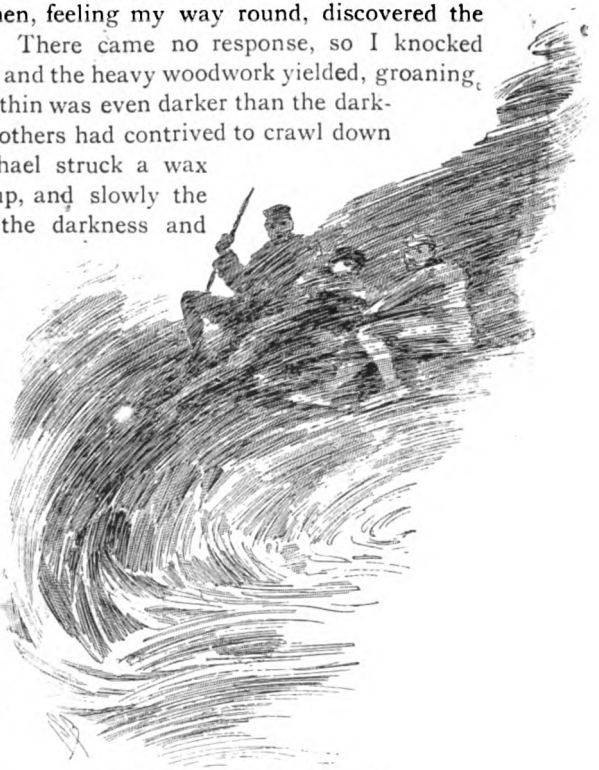
All day long we had tramped through the pitiless rain, stopping only for an hour at noon to eat some dried venison, and smoke a pipe beneath the shelter of an overhanging cliff. Soon afterwards Michael knocked over a ryper (a bird that will hardly take the trouble to hop out of your way) with his gun-barrel, which incident cheered us a little, and, later on, our flagging spirits were still further revived by the discovery of apparently very recent deer-tracks. These we followed, forgetful, in our eagerness, of the lengthening distance back to the hut, of the fading daylight, of the gathering mist. The track led us higher and higher, further and further into the mountains, until on the shores of a desolate rock-bound vand it abruptly ended, and we stood staring at one another, and the snow began to fall.

Unless in the next half-hour we could chance upon a saeter, this meant passing the night upon the mountain. Michael and I looked at the guide, but though, with characteristic Norwegian sturdiness, he put a bold face upon it, we could see that in that deepening darkness he knew no more than we did. Wasting no time on words, we made straight for the nearest point of descent, knowing that any human habitation must be far below us.

Down we scrambled, heedless of torn clothes and bleeding hands, the darkness pressing closer round us. Then suddenly it became black—black as pitch—and we could only hear each other. Another step might mean death. We stretched out our hands, and felt each other. Why we spoke in whispers, I do not know, but we seemed afraid of our own voices. We agreed there was nothing for it but to stop where we were till morning, clinging to the short grass; so we lay there side by side, for what may have been five minutes or may have been an hour. Then, attempting to turn, I lost my grip and rolled. I made convulsive efforts to clutch the ground, but the incline was too steep. How far I fell I could not say, but at last something stopped me. I felt it cautiously with my foot; it

did not yield, so I twisted myself round and touched it with my hand. It seemed planted firmly in the earth. I passed my arm along to the right, then to the left. Then I shouted with joy. It was a fence.

Rising and groping about me, I found an opening, and passed through, and crept forward with palms outstretched until I touched the logs of a hut; then, feeling my way round, discovered the door, and knocked. There came no response, so I knocked louder; then pushed, and the heavy woodwork yielded, groaning. But the darkness within was even darker than the darkness without. The others had contrived to crawl down and join me. Michael struck a wax vesta and held it up, and slowly the room came out of the darkness and stood round us.



"CLINGING TO THE SHORT GRASS."

Then something rather startling happened. Giving one swift glance about him, our guide uttered a cry, and rushed out into the night, and disappeared. We followed to the door, and called after him, but only a voice came to us out of the blackness, and the only words that we could catch, shrieked back in terror, were: "The woman of the saeter—the woman of the saeter."

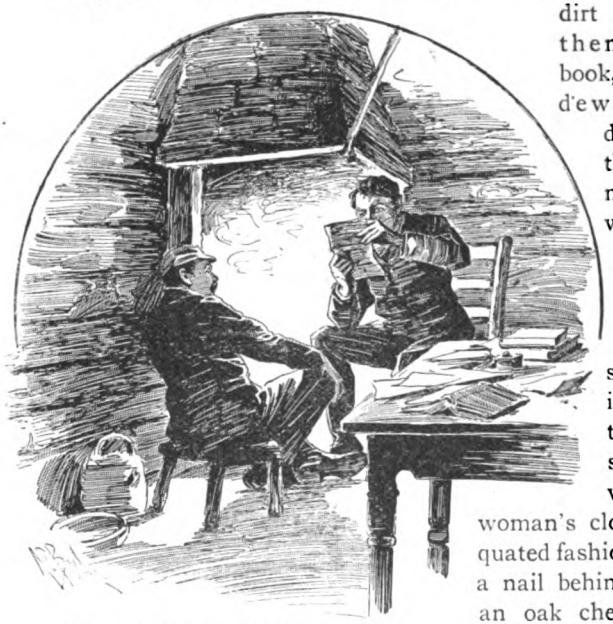
"Some foolish superstition about the place, I suppose," said Michael. "In these mountain solitudes men breed ghosts for company. Let us make a fire. Perhaps, when he sees the light, his desire for food and shelter may get the better of his fears."

We felt about in the small enclosure round the house, and gathered juniper and birch-twigs, and kindled a fire upon the open stove built in the corner of the room. Fortunately, we had some dried reindeer and bread in our bag, and on that and the ryper,

and the contents of our flasks, we supped. Afterwards, to while away the time, we made an inspection of the strange eyrie we had lighted on.

It was an old log-built saeter. Some of these mountain farmsteads are as old as the stone ruins of other countries. Carvings of strange beasts and demons were upon its blackened rafters, and on the lintel, in runic letters, ran this legend: "Hund builded me in the days of Haarfager." The house consisted of two large apartments. Originally, no doubt, these had been separate dwellings standing beside one another, but they were now connected by a long, low gallery. Most of the scanty furniture was almost as ancient as the walls themselves, but many articles of a comparatively recent date had been added. All was now, however, rotting and falling into decay.

The place appeared to have been deserted suddenly by its last occupants. Household utensils lay as they were left, rust and dirt encrusted on them. An open book, limp and mildewed, lay face downwards on the table, while many others were scattered about both rooms, together with much paper, scored with faded ink. The curtains hung in shreds about the windows; a woman's cloak, of an antiquated fashion, drooped from a nail behind the door. In an oak chest we found a tumbled heap of yellow letters. They were of various dates, extending over a period of four months, and with them, apparently intended to receive them, lay a large envelope, inscribed with an address in London that has since disappeared.



"BY THE DULL GLOW OF THE BURNING JUNIPER TWIGS."

Strong curiosity overcoming faint scruples, we read them by the dull glow of the burning juniper twigs, and, as we lay aside the last of them, there rose from the depths below us a wailing cry, and all night long it rose and died away, and rose again, and died away again; whether born of our brain or of some human thing, God knows.

And these, a little altered and shortened, are the letters :—

Extract from first letter :

"I cannot tell you, my dear Joyce, what a haven of peace this place is to me after the racket and fret of town. I am almost quite recovered already, and am growing stronger every day; and, joy of joys, my brain has come back to me, fresher and more vigorous, I think, for its holiday. In this silence and solitude my thoughts flow freely, and the difficulties of my task are disappearing as if by magic. We are perched upon a tiny plateau halfway up the mountain. On one side the rock rises almost perpendicularly, piercing the sky; while on the other, two thousand feet below us, the torrent hurls itself into black waters of the fiord. The house consists of two rooms—or, rather, it is two cabins connected by a passage. The larger one we use as a living room, and the other is our sleeping apartment. We have no servant, but do everything for ourselves. I fear sometimes Muriel must find it lonely. The nearest human habitation is eight miles away, across the mountain, and not a soul comes near us. I spend as much time as I can with her, however, during the day, and make up for it by working at night after she has gone to sleep, and when I question her, she only laughs, and answers that she loves to have me all to herself. (Here you will smile cynically, I know, and say, 'Humph, I wonder will she say the same when they have been married

'I SPEND AS MUCH TIME AS I CAN WITH HER."

six years instead of six months.') At the rate I am working now I shall have finished my first volume by the end of August, and then, my dear fellow, you must try and come over, and we will walk and talk together 'amid these storm-reared temples of the gods.' I have felt a new man since I arrived here. Instead of having to 'cudgel my brains,' as we say, thoughts crowd upon me. This work will make my name."

Part of the third letter, the second being mere talk about the book (a history apparently) that the man was writing:

"My dear Joyce,—I have written you two letters—this will make the third—but have been unable to post them. Every day I have been expecting a visit from some farmer or villager, for the Norwegians are kindly people towards strangers—to say nothing of the inducements of trade. A fortnight having passed, however, and the commissariat question having become serious, I yesterday set out before dawn, and made my way down to the valley; and this gives me something to tell you. Nearing the village, I met a peasant woman. To my intense surprise, instead of returning my salutation, she stared at me, as if I were some wild animal, and shrank away from me as far as the width of the road would permit. In the village the same experience awaited me. The children ran from me, the people avoided me. At last a grey-haired old man appeared to take pity on me, and from him I learnt the explanation of the mystery. It seems there is a strange superstition attaching to this house in which we are living. My things were brought up here by the two men who accompanied me from Dronthiem, but the natives are afraid to go near the place, and prefer to keep as far as possible from anyone connected with it.

"The story is that the house was built by one Hund, 'a maker of runes' (one of the old saga writers, no doubt), who lived here with his young wife. All went peacefully until, unfortunately for him, a certain maiden stationed at a neighbouring saeter grew to love him.—Forgive me if I am telling you what you know, but a 'saeter' is the name given to the upland pastures to which, during the summer, are sent the cattle, generally under the charge of one or more of the maids. Here for three months these girls will live in their lonely huts entirely shut off from the world. Customs change little in this land. Two or three such stations are within climbing distance of this house, at this day, looked after by the farmers' daughters, as in the days of Hund, 'maker of runes.'

"Every night, by devious mountain paths, the woman would come and tap lightly at Hund's door. Hund had built himself two cabins, one behind the other (these are now, as I think I have explained to you, connected by a passage); the smaller one was the homestead, in the other he carved and wrote, so that while the young wife slept the 'maker of runes' and the saeter woman sat whispering.

"One night, however, the wife learnt all things, but said no word. Then, as now, the ravine in front of the enclosure was crossed by a slight bridge of planks, and over this bridge the woman of the saeter passed and re-passed each night. On a day when Hund had gone down to fish in the fiord, the wife took an axe, and hacked and hewed at the bridge, yet it still looked firm and solid; and that night, as Hund sat waiting in his workshop, there struck upon his ears a piercing cry, and a crashing of logs and rolling rock, and then again the dull roaring of the torrent far below.

"THE WOMAN WOULD TAP LIGHTLY AT HUND'S DOOR."

"But the woman did not die unavenged, for that winter a man, skating far down the fiord, noticed a curious object embedded in the ice; and when, stooping, he looked closer, he saw two corpses, one gripping the other by the throat, and the bodies were the bodies of Hund and his young wife.

"Since then, they say the woman of the saeter haunts Hund's house, and if she sees a light within she taps upon the door, and no man may keep her out. Many, at different times, have tried to occupy the house, but strange tales are told of them. 'Men do not live at Hund's saeter,' said my old grey-haired friend, concluding his tale, 'they die there.' I have persuaded some of the braver of the villagers to bring what provisions and other necessaries we require up to a plateau about a mile from the house and leave them there. That is the most I have been able to do. It comes somewhat as a shock to one to find men and women—fairly educated and intelligent as many of them are—slaves to fears that one would expect a child to laugh at. But there is no reasoning with superstition."

Extract from the same letter, but from a part seemingly written a day or two later:

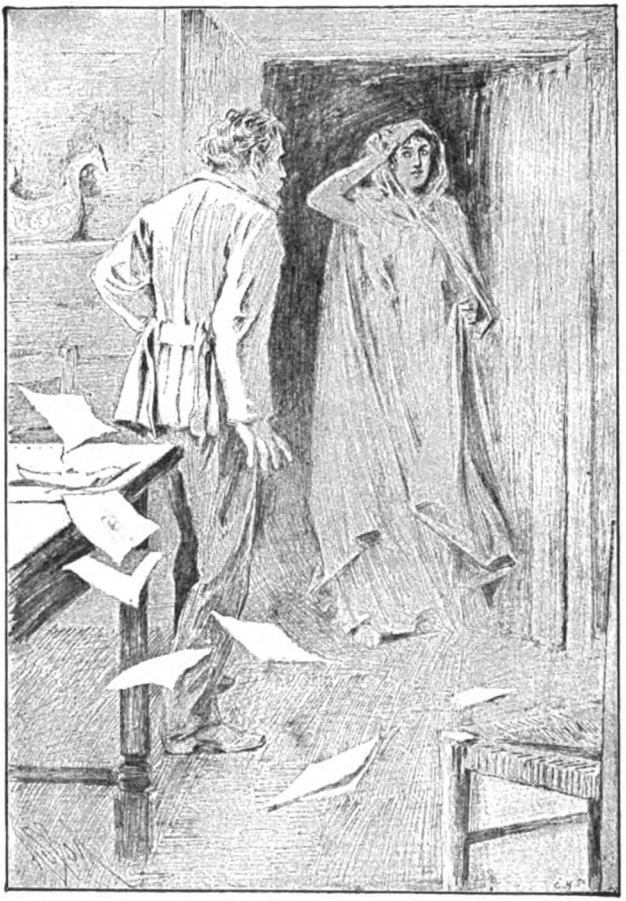
"At home I should have forgotten such a tale an hour after I had heard it, but these mountain fastnesses seem strangely fit to be the last stronghold of the supernatural. The woman haunts me already. At night, instead of working, I find myself listening for her tapping at the door; and yesterday an incident occurred that makes me fear for my own common sense. I had gone out for a long walk alone, and the twilight was thickening into darkness as I neared home. Suddenly looking up from my reverie, I saw, standing on a knoll the other side of the ravine, the figure of a woman. She held a cloak about her head, and I could not see her face. I took off my cap, and called out a good-night to her, but she never moved or spoke. Then, God knows why, for my brain was full of other thoughts at the time, a clammy chill crept over me, and my tongue grew dry and parched. I stood rooted to the spot, staring at her across the yawning gorge that divided us, and slowly she moved away, and passed into the gloom; and I continued my way. I have said nothing to Muriel, and shall not. The effect the story has had upon myself warns me not to."

From a letter dated eleven days later:

"She has come. I have known she would since that evening I saw her on the mountain, and last night she came, and we have sat and looked into each other's eyes. You will say, of course, that I am mad—that I have not recovered from my fever—that I have been working too hard—that I have heard a foolish tale, and that it has filled my overstrung brain with foolish fancies—I have told myself all that. But the thing came, nevertheless—a creature of flesh and blood? a creature of air? a creature of my own imagination? what matter; it was real to me.

"It came last night, as I sat working, alone. Each night I have waited for it, listened for it—longed for it, I know now. I heard the passing of its feet upon the bridge, the tapping of its hand upon the door, three times—tap, tap, tap. I felt my loins grow cold, and a pricking pain about my head, and I gripped my chair with both hands, and waited, and again there came the tapping—tap, tap, tap. I rose and slipped the bolt of the door leading to the other room, and again I waited, and again there came the tapping—tap, tap, tap. Then I opened the heavy outer door, and the wind rushed past me, scattering my papers, and the woman entered in, and I closed the door behind her. She threw

her hood back from her head, and unwound a kerchief from about her neck, and laid it on the table. Then she crossed and sat before the fire, and I noticed her bare feet were damp with the night dew.



"THE WOMAN ENTERED.'

"I stood over against her and gazed at her, and she smiled at me—a strange, wicked smile, but I could have laid my soul at her feet. She never spoke or moved, and neither did I feel the need of spoken words, for I understood the meaning of those upon the Mount when they said, 'Let us make here tabernacles: it is good for us to be here.'

"How long a time passed thus I do not know, but suddenly the woman held her hand up, listening, and there came a faint sound from the other room. Then swiftly she drew her hood about her face and passed out, closing the door softly behind her; and I drew back the bolt of the inner door and waited, and hearing nothing more, sat down, and must have fallen asleep in my chair.

"I awoke, and instantly there flashed through my mind the thought of the kerchief the woman had left behind her, and I started from my chair to hide it. But the table was already laid for breakfast, and my wife sat with her elbows on the table and her head between her hands, watching me with a look in her eyes that was new to me.

"She kissed me, though her lips were a little cold, and I argued to myself that the whole thing must have been a dream. But later in the day, passing the open door when her back was towards me, I saw her take the kerchief from a locked chest and look at it.

"I have told myself it must have been a kerchief of her own, and that all the rest has been my imagination—that if not, then my strange visitant was no spirit, but a woman, and that, if human thing knows human thing, it was no creature of flesh and blood that sat beside me last night. Besides, what woman would she be? The nearest saeter is a three hours' climb to a strong man, the paths are dangerous even in daylight: what woman would have found them in the night? What woman would have chilled the air around her, and have made the blood flow cold through all my veins? Yet if she come again I will speak to her. I will stretch out my hand and see whether she be mortal thing or only air."

The fifth letter:

"My dear Joyce,—Whether your eyes will ever see these letters is doubtful. From this place I shall never send them. They would read to you as the ravings of a madman. If ever I return to England I may one day show them to you, but when I do it will be when I, with you, can laugh over them. At present I write them merely to hide away—putting the words down on paper saves my screaming them aloud.

"She comes each night now, taking the same seat beside the embers, and fixing upon me those eyes, with the hell-light in them, that burn into my brain; and at rare times she smiles, and all my Being passes out of me, and is hers. I make no attempt to

work. I sit listening for her footsteps on the creaking bridge, for the rustling of her feet upon the grass, for the tapping of her hand upon the door. No word is uttered between us. Each day I say: 'When she comes to-night I will speak to her. I will stretch out my hand and touch her.' Yet when she enters, all thought and will goes out from me.

"I STOOD GAZING AT HER."

"Last night, as I stood gazing at her, my soul filled with her wondrous beauty as a lake with moonlight, her lips parted, and she started from her chair, and, turning, I thought I saw a white face pressed against the window, but as I looked it vanished.

Then she drew her cloak about her, and passed out. I slid back the bolt I always draw now, and stole into the other room, and, taking down the lantern, held it above the bed. But Muriel's eyes were closed as if in sleep."

Extract from the sixth letter:

"It is not the night I fear, but the day. I hate the sight of this woman with whom I live, whom I call 'wife.' I shrink from the blow of her cold lips, the curse of her stony eyes. She has seen, she has learnt; I feel it, I know it. Yet she winds her arms around my neck, and calls me sweetheart, and smooths my hair with her soft, false hands. We speak mocking words of love to one another, but I know her cruel eyes are ever following me. She is plotting her revenge, and I hate her, I hate her, I hate her!"

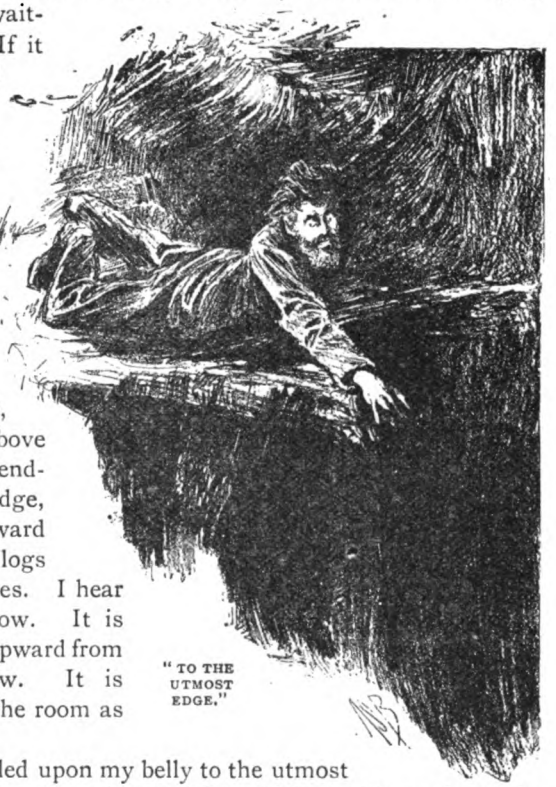
Part of the seventh letter:

"This morning I went down to the fiord. I told her I should not be back until the evening. She stood by the door watching me until we were mere specks to one another, and a promontory of the mountain shut me from view. Then, turning aside from the track, I made my way, running and stumbling over the jagged ground, round to the other side of the mountain, and began to climb again. It was slow, weary work. Often I had to go miles out of my road to avoid a ravine, and twice I reached a high point only to have to descend again. But at length I crossed the ridge, and crept down to a spot from where, concealed, I could spy upon my own house. She—my wife—stood by the flimsy bridge. A short hatchet, such as butchers use, was in her hand. She leant against a pine trunk, with her arm behind her, as one stands whose back aches with long stooping in some cramped position; and even at that distance I could see the cruel smile about her lips.

"Then I recrossed the ridge, and crawled down again, and, waiting until evening, walked slowly up the path. As I came in view of the house she saw me, and waved her handkerchief to me, and, in answer, I waved my hat, and shouted curses at her that the wind whirled away into the torrent. She met me with a kiss, and I breathed no hint to her that I had seen. Let her devil's work remain undisturbed. Let it prove to me what manner of thing this is that haunts me. If it be a Spirit, then the bridge will bear it safely; if it be woman ——

"But I dismiss the thought. If it be human thing why does it sit gazing at me, never speaking; why does my tongue refuse to question it; why does all power forsake me in its presence, so that I stand as in a dream? Yet if it be Spirit, why do I hear the passing of her feet; and why does the night-rain glisten on her hair?

"I force myself back into my chair. It is far into the night, and I am alone, waiting, listening. If it be Spirit, she will come to me; and if it be woman, I shall hear her cry above the storm—unless it be a demon mocking me.



"TO THE UTMOST EDGE."

"I have heard the cry. It rose, piercing and shrill, above the storm, above the riving and rending of the bridge, above the downward crashing of the logs and loosened stones. I hear it as I listen now. It is cleaving its way upward from the depths below. It is wailing through the room as I sit writing.

"I have crawled upon my belly to the utmost edge of the still standing pier until I could feel with my hand the jagged splinters left by the fallen planks, and have looked down. But the chasm was full to the brim with darkness. I shouted, but the wind shook my voice into mocking laughter. I sit here, feebly striking at the madness that is creeping nearer and nearer to me. I tell myself the whole thing is but the fever in my brain. The bridge was rotten. The storm was strong. The cry is but a single one among the many voices of the mountain. Yet still I listen, and it rises, clear and shrill, above the moaning of the pines,

above the mighty sobbing of the waters. It beats like blows upon my skull, and I know that she will never come again."

Extract from the last letter:

"I shall address an envelope to you, and leave it among them. Then, should I never come back, some chance wanderer may one day find and post them to you, and you will know.

"My books and writings remain untouched. We sit together of a night—this woman I call 'wife' and I—she holding in her hands some knitted thing that never grows longer by a single stitch, and I with a volume before me that is ever open at the same page. And day and night we watch each other stealthily, moving to and fro about the silent house; and at times, looking round swiftly, I catch the smile upon her lips before she has time to smooth it away.

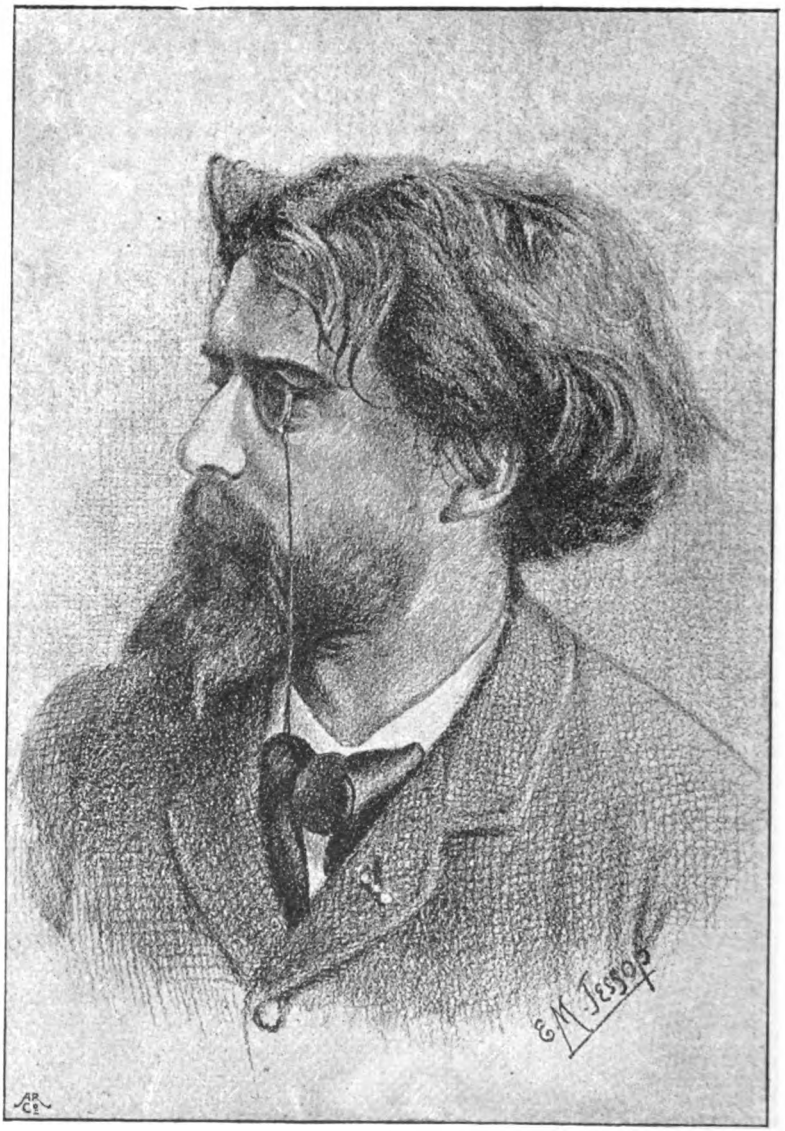
"We speak like strangers about this and that, making talk to hide our thoughts. We make a pretence of busying ourselves about whatever will help us to keep apart from one another.

"At night, sitting here between the shadows and the dull glow of the smouldering twigs, I sometimes think I hear the tapping I have learnt to listen for, and I start from my seat, and softly open the door and look out. But only the Night stands there. Then I close to the latch, and she—the living woman—asks me in her purring voice what sound I heard, hiding a smile as she stoops low over her work, and I answer lightly, and, moving towards her, put my arm about her, feeling her softness and her suppleness, and wondering, supposing I held her close to me with one arm while pressing her from me with the other, how long before I should hear the cracking of her bones.

"For here, amid these savage solitudes, I also am grown savage. The old primeval passions of love and hate stir within me, and they are fierce and cruel and strong, beyond what you men of the later ages could understand. The culture of the centuries has fallen from me as a flimsy garment whirled away by the mountain wind; the old savage instincts of the race lie bare. One day I shall twine my fingers about her full white throat, and her eyes will slowly come towards me, and her lips will part, and the red tongue creep out; and backwards, step by step, I shall push her before me, gazing the while upon her bloodless face, and it will be my turn to smile. Backwards through the open door, backwards along the garden path between the juniper bushes, backwards till her heels are overhanging the ravine, and she grips

life with nothing but her little toes, I shall force her, step by step, before me. Then I shall lean forward, closer, closer, till I kiss her purpling lips, and down, down, down, past the startled sea-birds, past the white spray of the foss, past the downward peeping pines, down, down, down, we will go together, till we find my love where she lies sleeping beneath the waters of the fiord."

With these words ended the last letter, unsigned. At the first streak of dawn we left the house, and, after much wandering, found our way back to the valley. But of our guide we heard no news. Whether he remained still upon the mountain, or whether by some false step he had perished upon that night, we never learnt.



ALPHONSE DAUDET.

Alphonse Daudet at Home.

By Marie Adelaide Belloc.

Illustrations by Jan Berg, J. Barnard Davis, and E. M. Jessop.

M. AND MADAME ALPHONSE DAUDET—for it is impossible to mention the great French writer without also immediately recalling the personality of the lady who has been his best friend, his tireless collaboratrice, and his constant companion during the last twenty-five years—have made their home on the top storey of a fine stately house in the Rue de Belle Chasse, a narrow old-world street running from the Boulevard Saint Germain up into the Quartier Latin.

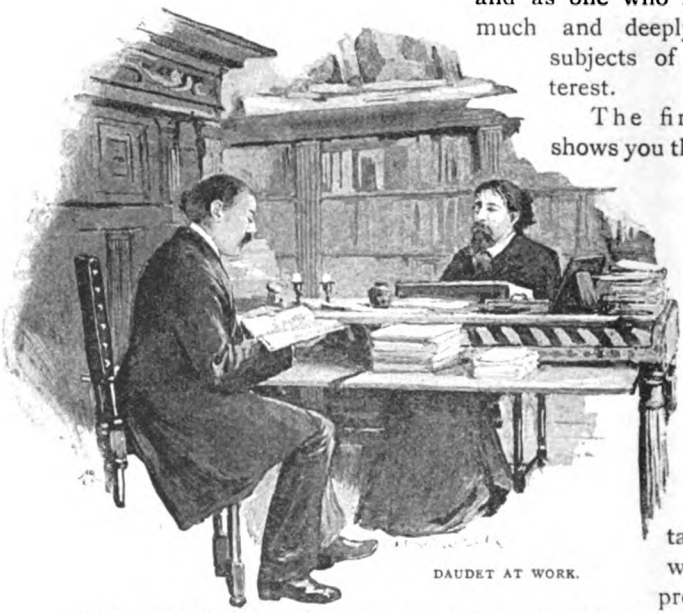
MADAME DAUDET.

Like most houses on the left bank of the Seine, the "hotel" is built round a large courtyard, the Daudets' pretty *appartement* being situated on the side furthest from the street, and commanding a splendid view of Southern Paris, whilst in the immediate foreground is one of those peaceful, quiet gardens, owned by some of the old Paris religious foundations still left undisturbed by the march of Republican time.

The study in which Alphonse Daudet does all his work, and receives his more intimate friends, is opposite the hall door, but a strict watch is kept by Madame Daudet's faithful servants, and no one is allowed to break in upon the privacy of *le maître* without some good and sufficient reason. Few writers are so personally popular with their readers as is Alphonse Daudet; there is about most of his books a strange magnetic charm, and every post brings him quaint, curious, and often pathetic, epistles from men and women all over the world, and of every nationality, discussing his characters, suggesting alterations, offering him plots, and

asking his advice on their own most intimate cases of conscience, whilst, if he were to grant all the requests for personal interviews which come to him day by day, he would literally have not a moment for work or leisure.

But to those who have the good fortune of his acquaintance, M. Daudet is the most delightful and courteous of hosts, and, though rarely alluding to his own work in conversation, he will always answer those questions put to him to the best of his ability, and as one who has thought much and deeply on most subjects of human interest.



DAUDET AT WORK.

The first glance shows you that Daudet's study is a real work room; there is no straining after effect; the plain, comfortable furniture, including the large solid writing table covered with papers, proofs, literary biblots, and the various instruments necessary to his craft, were made and presented to him by a number of workmen, his military comrades during the war, and serve to perpetually remind him of what, he says, has been the most instructive and intensely interesting period of his life. "That terrible year," I have heard him exclaim more than once, "taught me many things. It was then for the first time that I learned to appreciate our workpeople, *le peuple*. Had it not been for what I then went through, one whole side of good human nature would have been shut to me. The Paris *ouvrier* is a splendid fellow, and among my best friends I reckon some of those who fought by my side in 1870."

During those same eventful months M. Daudet made the acquaintance of the man who was afterwards to prove his most

indefatigable helper; it was between one of the long waits outside the fortifications. To his surprise, the novelist saw a young soldier reading a Latin book. In answer to a question, the *pioupiou* explained that he had been brought up to be a priest, but had finally changed his mind and become a workman. Now, the ex seminarist is M. Daudet's daily companion and literary agent; it is he who makes all the necessary arrangements with editors and publishers, and several of Daudet's later writings have been dictated to him.

All that refers to a great writer's methods cannot but be of interest. Daudet's novels are really human documents, for from early youth he has put down from day to day, almost from hour to hour, all that he has seen, heard, and done. He calls his note-books "my memory." When about to start a new novel he draws out a general plan, then he copies out all the incidents from his note-books which he thinks will be of value to him for the story. The next step is to make out a rough list of chapters, and then, with infinite care, and constant corrections, he begins writing out the book, submitting each page to his wife's criticism, and discussing with her the working out of every incident, and the arrangement of every episode. Unlike most novelists, M. Daudet does not care to always write on the same paper, and his manuscripts are not all written on paper of the same size. Of late he has been using some large, rough hand-made sheets, which Victor Hugo had specially made for his own use, and which have been given to M. Daudet by Georges Hugo, who knew what a pleasure his grandfather would have taken in the thought that any of his literary leavings would have been useful to his little Jeanne's father-in-law, for it will be remembered that Léon Daudet, the novelist's eldest child, married some three years ago "Peach Blossom" Hugo, for whom was written *L'Art d'être Grand-père.*

Although M. Daudet takes precious care of his little note-books, both past and present, he has never troubled himself much as to what became of the fair copies of his novels. They remain in the printers' and publishers' hands, and will probably some day attain a fabulous value.

His handwriting is clear, and somewhat feminine in form, and he always uses a steel pen. Till his health broke down he wrote every word of his manuscripts himself, but of late he has been obliged to dictate to his wife and two secretaries; re-writing, however, much of his work in the margin of the manuscript, and also adding to, and polishing, each chapter in proof, for no writer pays

more attention to style and chiselled form than the man who has been called the French Dickens, and whose compositions, to the uninitiated, would seem to be singularly spontaneous.

Since the war M. Daudet has never had an hour's sleep without artificial aid, such as chloral; but devotees of Lady Nicotine will be interested to learn that in answer to a question he once said, "I have smoked a great deal while working, and the more I smoked the better I worked. I have never noticed that tobacco is injurious, but I must admit that, when I am not well, even the smell of a cigarette is odious." He added that he had a great horror of alcohol as a stimulant for work, and has ofttimes been heard to say that those who believe in working on spirits had better make up their minds to become total abstainers if they hope to achieve anything in the way of literature.

Unlike most literary *ménages*, M. and Madame Daudet are one of those happy couples who are said by cynics to be the exceptions which prove the rule. Literary men are proverbially unlucky in their helpmates; and geniuses have been proved again and again to reserve their fitful humours and uncertain tempers for home use. M. and Madame Daudet are at once sympathetic, literary partners, and the happiest of married couples; in *L'Enfance d'une Parisienne*, *Enfants et Mères*, and *Fragments d'un Livre Inédit*, Madame Daudet has proved that she is in her own way as original and delicate an artist as her husband. She has never written a novel, but, as a great French critic once aptly remarked, "Each one of her books contains the essence of innumerable novels." Her literary work has been an afterthought, an accident; she is not anxious to make a name by her writing, and her most intimate friends have never heard her mention her literary faculty; like most Frenchwomen, a devoted mother, when not helping her husband, she is absorbed in her children, and whilst her boys were at the Lycée she taught herself Latin in order to help them prepare their lessons every evening; and she is now her young daughter's closest companion and friend.

One of the most charming characteristics of Alphonse Daudet is his love for, and pride in, his wife. "I often think of my first meeting with her," he will say. "I was quite a young fellow, and had a great prejudice against literary women, and especially against poetesses, but I came, saw, and was conquered, and," he will conclude smiling, "I have remained under the charm ever since. . . . . People sometimes ask me whether I approve of women writing; how should I not, when my own

wife has always written, and when all that is best in my literary work is owing to her influence and suggestion. There are whole realms of human nature which we men cannot explore. We have not eyes to see, nor hearts to understand, certain subtle things which a woman perceives at once; yes, women have a mission to fulfil in the literature of to-day."

Strangely enough, M. Daudet made the acquaintance of his future wife through a favourable review he wrote of a volume of verse published by her parents, M. and Madame Allard. They were so pleased with the notice that they wrote and asked the critic to come and see them. How truly thankful the one time critic must now feel that he was inspired to deal gently by the little *bouquin*.

THE PROVENCAL FURNITURE.

Madame Daudet is devoted to art, and her pretty *salon* is one of the most artistic *intérieurs* in Paris, whilst the dining-room, fitted up with old Provençal furniture, looks as though it had been lifted bodily out of some fastness in troubadour land.

The tie between the novelist and his children is a very close one; he has said of Léon that there stands his best work; and, indeed, the young man is in a fair way to make his father's words come true, for, inheriting much of both parents' literary faculty, M. Léon Daudet lately made his *débût* as a novelist with *Hærès*, a remarkable story with a purpose, in which the author strove to explain his somewhat curious theories on the laws of heredity. Having originally been intended for the medical profession, he takes a special interest in this subject. It is curious that three such distinct and different literary gifts should exist simultaneously in the same family.

As soon as even the cool, narrow streets of the Quartier Latin begin to grow dusty and sultry with summer heat, the whole Daudet family emigrate to the novelist's charming country cottage

at Champrosay. There old friends, such as M. Edmond de Goncourt, are ever made welcome, and life is one long holiday for those who bring no work with them. Daudet himself has described his country home as being "situated thirty miles from Paris, at a lovely bend of the Seine, a provincial Seine invaded by bulrushes, purple irises, and water-lilies, bearing on its bosom tufts of grass, and clumps of tangled roots, on which the tired dragon-flies alight, and allow themselves to be lazily floated down the stream."

It was in a round, ivy-clad pavilion overhanging the river that *le maître du logis* wrote *L'Immortel*. On an exceptionally fine day

THE DRAWING ROOM.

he would get into a canoe, and let it drift among the reeds, till, in the shadow of an old willow-tree, the boat became his study, and the two crossed oars his desk. Strange that so bitter and profoundly cynical a study of modern Paris life should have been evolved in such surroundings, whilst the *Contes de Mon Moulin*, and many other of his most ideal *nouvelles*, were written in the sombre grey house where M. and Madame Daudet lived during many years of their early married life.

The author of *Les Rois en Exile* has not yet utilised Champrosay as a background to any of his stories; he takes notes,

however, of all that goes on in the little village community, much as he did in the Duc de Morny's splendid palace, and in time his readers may have the pleasure of perusing an idyllic yet realistic picture of French country life, an outcome of his summer experiences.

Alphonse Daudet was born just fifty-three years ago in the sunlit, white *bâtisse* at Nimes, which he has described in the painful, melancholy history of his childhood, entitled *Le Petit Chose*. At an age when other French boys are themselves *lycéans*, he became usher in a kind of provincial Dotheboys Hall; and some idea of what the sensitive, poetical lad went through may be gained by the fact that he more than once seriously contemplated committing suicide. But fate had something better in store for *le petit Daudet*, and his seventeenth birthday found him in Paris sharing his brother Ernest's garret, having arrived in the great city with just forty sous remaining of his little store, after spending two days and nights in a third-class carriage.

Even now, there is a touch of protection and maternal affection in the way in which Ernest Daudet regards his younger brother, and the latter never mentions his early struggles without recalling the self-abnegation, generous kindliness, and devotion of "*mon frère.*" The two went through some hard times together. "Ah!" says the great writer, speaking of those days, "I thought my brother passing rich, for he earned seventy-five francs a month by being secretary to an old gentleman at whose dictation he took down his memoirs." And so they managed to live, going occasionally to the theatre, and seeing not a little of life, on the sum of thirty shillings a month apiece!

When receiving visitors, the author of *Tartarin* places himself with his back to the light on one of the deep, comfortable couches which line the fireplace of his study, but from out the huge mass of his powerful head, surrounded by the lionese mane, which has become famous in his portraits and photographs, gleam two piercing dark eyes, which, like those of most short-sighted people, seem to perceive what is immediately before them with an extra intensity of vision.

To ask one who has far outrun his fellows what he thinks of the race seems a superfluous question. Yet, in answer as to what he would say of literature as a profession, M. Daudet gave a startlingly clear and decided answer.

"The man who has it in him to write will do so, however great his difficulties, but I would never advise any young fellow to make

literature his profession, and I think it is nothing short of madness to give up a good chance of making your livelihood in some other, though perhaps less congenial, fashion, in order to pursue the calling of letters. You would be surprised if you knew the number of young people who come to me for sympathy with their literary aspirations, and as for the manuscripts submitted to me, the sending of them back keeps one of my friends pretty busy, for of late years I have had to refuse to look at anything sent to me in this way. In vain I say to those who come to consult me, 'However much occupied you are with your present way of earning a livelihood, if you have it in you to write anything you will surely find time to do it.' They go away unconvinced, and a few months later sees them launched on the perilous seas of journalism; with now really not a moment to spare for serious writing! Of course, if the would-be writer has already an income, I see no reason why he should not give himself up to literature altogether. It was in order to provide a certain number of coming geniuses with the wherewithal to find at least spare time in which to write possible masterpieces, that my friend Edmond de Goncourt and his brother Jules conceived the noble and unselfish idea to found an institute, the members of which would require but two qualifications, poverty and exceptional literary power. If a would-be writer can find someone who will assist him in this manner, well and good; but no one is a prophet in his own country, and friends and relations are, as a rule, most unwilling to waste good money on their young literary acquaintances. Still I admit that the Academie de Goncourt would fulfil a want, for there have been, and are, great geniuses who positively cannot produce their masterpieces from bitter poverty."

THE BILLIARD AND FENCING ROOM.

"Then do you believe in journalism as a stepping-stone to literature?"

"I cannot say that I do, though, strangely enough, there is scarcely one of us—I allude to latter-day French novelists and critics—who did not spend at least a portion of his youth doing hard, pot-boiling newspaper work. But I deplore the necessity of a novelist having to make journalism his start in life, for, as all newspaper writing has to be done against time, his style must certainly deteriorate, and his literature becomes journalese."

"What was your own first literary essay, M. Daudet?"

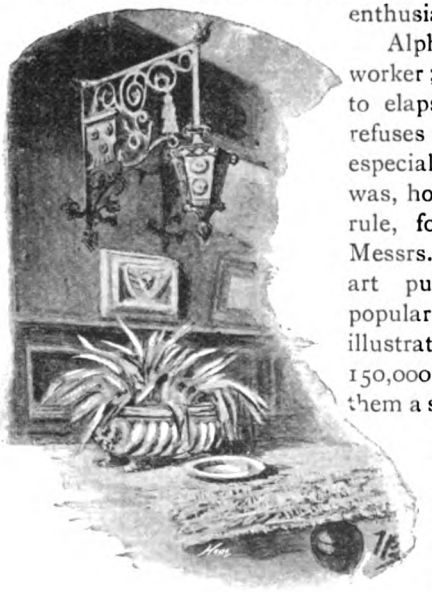
"You know I was born a poet, not a novelist; besides, when I was a lad everyone wrote poetry, so I made my *début* by a book of verse entitled *Mes Amoureuses*. I was just eighteen, and this was my first stroke of luck; for six weary months I had carried my poor little manuscript from publisher to publisher, but, strange to say, I never got further than these great people's ante-chamber; at last, a certain Tardieu, a publisher who was himself an author, took pity on my *Amoureuses*. The title had been a happy inspiration, and the volume received some favourable notices, and led indirectly to my getting journalistic work."

Indeed, it seems to have been more or less of an accident that M. Daudet did not devote himself entirely to poetry; and probably the very poverty which seemed so bitter to him during his youth obliged him to try what he could do in the way of story-writing, that branch of literature being supposed by the French to be the best from a pecuniary point of view. So remarkable were his verses felt to be by the critics of the day, that one of them wrote, "When dying, Alfred de Musset left his two pens as a last legacy to our literature—Feuillet has taken that of prose; into Daudet's hand has slipped that of verse."

But some years passed before the poet-journalist became the novelist; at one time he dreamed of being a great dramatist, and before he was five-and-twenty several of his plays had been produced at leading Paris theatres. Fortune smiled upon him, and he was appointed to be one of the Duc de Morny's secretaries, a post he held four years, and which supplied him with much valuable material for several of his later novels, notably *Les Rois en Exile*, *Le Nabab*, and *Numa Romestan*, for during this period he was brought into close and intimate contact with all the noteworthy personages of the Third Empire, making at the same time the acquaintance of most of the literary lions of the day—Flaubert, with whom he became very intimate; Edmond and Jules de Gon-

court, the two gifted brothers who may be said to have founded the realistic school of fiction years before Emile Zola came forward as the apostle of realism; Tourguenieff, the two Dumas, and many others who welcomed enthusiastically the young Southern poet into their midst.

The first page of *Le Petit Chose* was written in the February of 1866, and was finished during the author's honeymoon, but it was with *Fromont Jeune et Risler Aîné*, published six years later, that he made his first real success as a novelist, the work being crowned by the French Academy, and arousing a veritable enthusiasm both at home and abroad.



THE TUILERIES STONE.

Alphonse Daudet is not a quick worker; he often allows several years to elapse between his novels, and refuses to bind himself down to any especial date. *Tartarin de Tarascon* was, however, an exception to this rule, for the author wrote it for Messrs. Guillaume, the well-known art publishers, who, wishing to popularise an improved style of illustration, offered M. Daudet 150,000 francs (£6,000) to write them a serio-comic story. *Tartarin*, which obtained an instant popularity, proved the author's versatility, but won him the hatred of the good people of Provence, who have never forgiven him for having made fun of their foibles. On one occasion a bagman, passing through Tarascon, put, by way of a jest, the name "Alphonse Daudet" in his hotel register. The news quickly spread, and had it not been for the prompt help of the innkeeper, who managed to smuggle him out of the town, he might easily have had cause to regret his foolish joke.

Judging by sales, *Sapho* has been the most popular of Daudet's novels, for over a quarter of a million copies have been sold. Like most of his stories, its appearance provoked a great deal of discussion, as did the author's dedication "To my two sons at the age of twenty." But, in answer to his critics, Daudet always

replies, "I wrote the book with a purpose, and I have succeeded in painting the picture as I wished it to appear. Each of the types mentioned by me really existed; each incident was copied from life. . . . . "

The year following its publication M. Daudet dramatised *Sapho*, and the play was acted with considerable success at the Gymnase, Jane Hading being in the *title-rôle*. Last year the play was again acted in Paris, with Madame Rejane as the heroine.

DAUDET S YOUNGER SON.

M. Daudet, like most novelists, takes a special interest in all that concerns dramatic art and the theatre. When his health permits it he is a persistent first-nighter, and most of his novels lend themselves in a rare degree to stage adaptation.

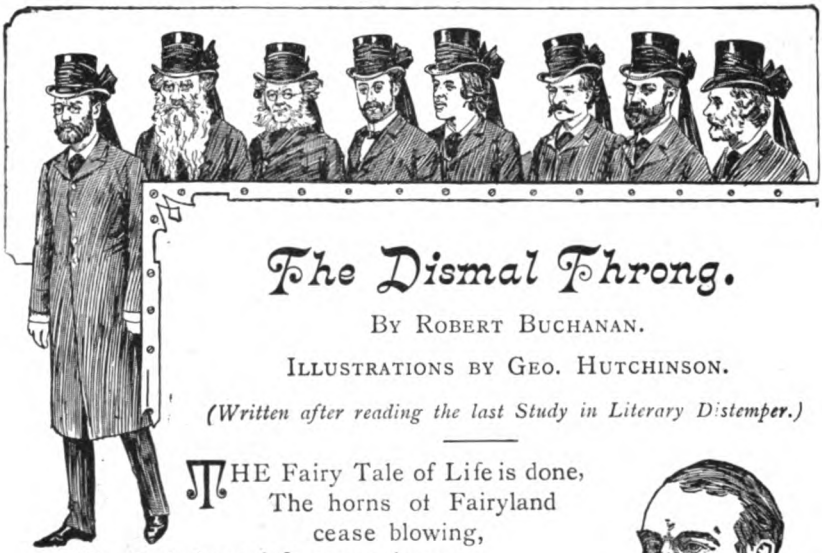
I once asked him what he thought of the attempts now so frequently made to introduce unconventionality and naked realism on the stage.

"I have every sympathy," he replied, "with the attempts made by Antoine and his Théatre Libre to discover strong and unconventional work. But I do not believe in the new terms which a certain school have invented for everything; after all, the play's the thing, whether it is produced by a group who dub themselves romantics, realists, old or new style. Realism is not necessarily real life; a photograph only gives a rigid, neutral side of the object placed in front of the camera. A dissection of what we call affection does not give so vivid an impression of the master-passion as a true love-sonnet written by a poet. Life is a

thing of infinite gradations; a dramatist wishes to show existence as it really is, not as it may be under exceptionally revolting circumstances."

His own favourite dramatist and writer is Shakespeare, whom, however, he only knows by translation, and *Hamlet* and *Desdemona* are his favourite hero and heroine in the fiction of the world, although he considered Balzac his literary master.

M. Daudet will seldom be beguiled into talking on politics. Like all Frenchmen, the late Panama scandals have profoundly shocked and disgusted him, as revealing a state of things discreditable to the Government of his country. But the creator of Désirée Dolobelle has a profound belief in human nature, and believes that, come what may, the novelist will never lack beautiful and touching models in the world round and about him.



The Dismal Throng.

By Robert Buchanan.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.

(Written after reading the last Study in Literary Distemper.)

THE Fairy Tale of Life is done,
The horns of Fairyland
cease blowing,
The Gods have left us one by one,
And the last Poets, too, are going!
Ended is all the mirth and song,
Fled are the merry Music-makers;
And what remains? The Dismal Throng
Of literary Undertakers!

THOMAS HARDY.

Clad in deep black of funeral cut,
With faces of forlorn expression,
Their eyes half open, souls close shut,
They stalk along in pale procession;
The latest seed of Schopenhauer,
Born of a Trull of Flaubert's choosing,
They cry, while on the ground they glower,
"There's nothing in the world amusing!"

ZOLA.

There's Zola, grimy as his theme,
Nosing the sewers with cynic pleasure,
Sceptic of all that poets dream,
All hopes that simple mortals treasure;
With sense most keen for odours strong,
He stirs the Drains and scents disaster,
Grim monarch of the Dismal Throng
Who bow their heads before "the Master."

There's Miss Matilda[1] in the south,
There's Valdes[2] in Madrid and Seville,
There's mad Verlaine[3] with gangrened mouth,
Grinning at Rimbaud and the Devil.
From every nation of the earth,
Instead of smiling merry-makers,
They come, the foes of Love and Mirth,
The Dismal Throng of Undertakers.

There's Tolstoi, towering in his place
O'er all the rest by head and shoulders;
No sunshine on that noble face
Which Nature meant to charm beholders!
Mad with his self-made martyr's shirt,
Obscene, through hatred of obsceneness,
He from a pulpit built of Dirt
Shrieks his Apocalypse of Cleanness!

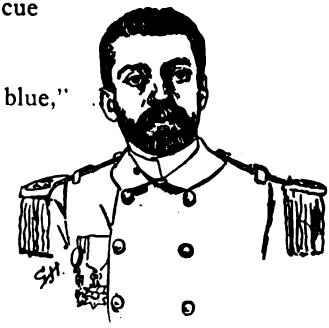
TOLSTOI

IBSEN.

There's Ibsen,[4] puckering up his lips,
Squirming at Nature and Society,
Drawing with tingling finger-tips
The clothes off naked Impropriety!
So nice, so nasty, and so grim,
He hugs his gloomy bottled thunder;
To summon up one smile from *him*
Would be a miracle of wonder!

[1] Mathilde Serao, an Italian novelist.
[2] A Spanish novelist.
[3] Verlaine and Rimbaud, two poets of the Parisian Decadence.
[4] A Norwegian playwright.

There's Maupassant,[1] who takes his cue
From Dame Bovary's bourgeois troubles;
There's Bourget, dyed his own sick "blue,"
There's Loti, blowing blue soap bubbles;
There's Mendès[2] (no Catullus, he!)
There's Richepin,[3] sick with sensual passion.
The Dismal Throng! So foul, so free,
Yet sombre all, as is the fashion.



PIERRE LOTI

"Turn down the lights! put out the Sun!
Man is unclean and morals muddy,
The Fairy Tale of Life is done,
Disease and Dirt must be our study!
Tear open Nature's genial heart,
Let neither God nor gods escape us,
But spare, to give our subjects zest,
The basest god of all—Priapus!"

The Dismal Throng! 'Tis thus they preach,
From Christiania to Cadiz,
Recruited as they talk and teach
By dingy lads and draggled ladies;
Without a sunbeam or a song,
With no clear Heaven to hunger after;
The Dismal Throng! the Dismal Throng!
The foes of Life and Love and Laughter!

By Shakespere's Soul! if this goes on,
From every face of man and woman
The gift of gladness will be gone,
And laughter will be thought inhuman!
The only beast who smiles is Man!
That marks him out from meaner creatures!
Confound the Dismal Throng, who plan
To take God's birth-mark from our features!

---

[1] Guy de Maupassant, Paul Bourget, and Pierre Loti, novelists of the Decadence.
[2] Catulle Mendès, a Parisian poet and novelist.
[3] Jean Richepin, ditto.

Manfreds who walk the hospitals,
Laras and Giaours grown scientific,
They wear the clothes and bear the palls
Of Stormy Ones once thought terrific;
They play the same old funeral tune,
And posture with the same dejection,
But turn from howling at the moon
To literary vivisection!

OSCAR WILDE.

And while they loom before our view,
Dark'ning the air that should be sunny,
Here's Oscar,[1] growing dismal too,
Our Oscar, who was once so funny!
Blue china ceases to delight
The dear curl'd darling of society,
Changed are his breeches, once so bright,
For foreign breaches of propriety!

GEORGE MOORE.

I like my Oscar, tolerate
My Archer[2] of the Dauntless Grammar,
Nay, e'en my Moore[3] I estimate
Not too unkindly, 'spite his clamour;
But I prefer my roses still
To all the garlic in their garden—
Let Hedda gabble as she will,
I'll stay with Rosalind, in Arden!

O for one laugh of Rabelais,
To rout these moralising croakers!
(The cowls were mightier far than they,
Yet fled before that King of Jokers)
O for a slash of Fielding's pen
To bleed these pimps of Melancholy!
O for a Boz, born once again
To play the Dickens with such folly!

---

[1] Mr. Oscar Wilde.
[2] Mr. William Archer, a newspaper critic.
[3] Mr. George Moore, an author and newspaper critic.

MARK TWAIN.

Yet stay! why bid the dead arise?
Why call them back from Charon's wherry?
Come, Yankee Mark, with twinkling eyes,
Confuse these ghouls with something merry!
Come, Kipling, with thy soldiers three,
Thy barrack-ladies frail and fervent,
Forsake thy themes of butchery
And be the merry Muses' servant!

Come, Dickens' foster-son, Bret Harte!
Come, Sims, though gigmen flout thy labours!
Tom Hardy, blow the clouds apart
With sound of rustic fifes and tabors!
Dick Blackmore, full of homely joy,
Come from thy garden by the river,
And pelt with fruit and flowers, old boy,
These dismal bores who drone for ever!

Come, too, George Meredith, whose eyes,
Though oft with vapours shadow'd over,
Can catch the sunlight from the skies
And flash it down on lass and lover;
Tell us of Life, and Love's young dream,
Show the prismatic soul of Woman,
Bring back the Light, whose morning beam
First made the Beast upright and human!

GEORGE MEREDITH.

You *can* be merry, George, I vow!
Wit through your cloudiest prosing twinkles!
Brood as you may, upon your brow
The cynic, Art, has left no wrinkles!
For you're a poet to the core,
No ghouls can from the Muses win you;
So throw your cap i' the air once more,
And show the joy of earth that's in you!

By Heaven! we want you one and all,
For Hypochondria is reigning—
The Mater Dolorosa's squall
Makes Nature hideous with complaining!
Ah! who will paint the Face that smiled
When Art was virginal and vernal—
The pure Madonna with her Child,
Pure as the light, and as eternal!

Pest on these dreary, dolent airs!
Confound these funeral pomps and poses!
Is Life Dyspepsia's and Despair's,
And Love's complexion all *chlorosis?*
A lie! There's Health, and Mirth, and Song,
The World still laughs, and goes a-Maying—
The dismal, droning, doleful Throng
Are only smuts in sunshine playing!

Play up, ye horns of Fairyland!
Shine out, O sun, and planets seven!
Beyond these clouds a beckoning Hand
Gleams from the lattices of Heaven!
The World's alive—still quick, not dead,
It needs no Undertaker's warning;
So put the Dismal Throng to bed,
And wake once more to Light and Morning!

NOTE.—These verses refer to a literary phenomenon that will in time become historical, that phenomenon being the sudden growth, in all parts of Europe, of a fungus-literature bred of Foulness and Decay; and contemporaneously, the intrusion into all parts of human life of a Calvinistic yet materialistic Morality. This literature of a sunless Decadence has spread widely, by virtue of its own uncleanness, and its leading characteristics are gloom, ugliness, prurience, preachiness, and weedy flabbiness of style. That it has not flourished in Great Britain, save among a small and discredited Cockney minority, is due to the inherent manliness and vigour of the national character. The land of Shakespere, Scott, Burns, Fielding, Dickens, and Charles Reade is protected against literary miasmas by the strength of its humour and the sunniness of its temperament.—R.B.

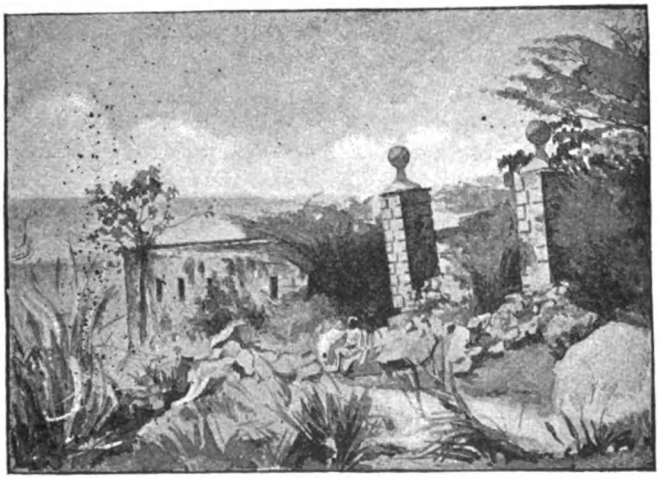
In the Hands of Jefferson.

By Eden Phillpotts.

Illustrations by Ronald Gray.

IT is not difficult to appreciate the recent catastrophe in Oceania, where the island of Great Sangir was partially smothered by terrific volcanic and seismic convulsions, when one has visited the Western Indies.

Many of these tropic isles probably owe their present isolation, if not their actual existence, to mighty earthquake throes in remote ages of terrestrial history beyond the memory of man. But



"WHERE LORD NELSON ENJOYED HIS HONEYMOON."

man's memory is not a very extensive affair, and at best probes the past to the extent of a mere rind of a few thousand years. For the rest he has to read the word of God, written in fossil and stone and those wondrous arcana of Nature, which, each in turn, yields a fragment of the secret of truth to human intellect.

Regions that have been produced or largely modified by earthquake and volcanic upheaval may, probably enough, vanish at any moment under like conditions; and the island of Nevis, hard by St.

Christopher, in the West Indies, strongly suggests a possibility of such disaster. It has always been the regular rendezvous of hurricanes and earthquakes, and it consists practically of one vast volcanic mountain which rises abruptly from the sea and pushes its densely-wooded sides three thousand two hundred feet into the sky. The crater shows no particularly active inclination at present, but it is doubtless wide awake and merely resting, like its volcanic neighbour in St. Christopher, where the breathing of the dormant giant can be noted through rent and rift. The Fourth Officer of our steamship "Rhine" assured me, as we approached the lofty dome of Nevis and gazed upon its fertile acclivities and fringe of palms, that it would never surprise him upon his rounds to find the place had altogether disappeared under the Caribbean Sea. He added, according to his custom, an allusion to Columbus, and explained also that, in the dead and gone days of Slave Traffic, Nevis was a much more important spot than it is ever likely to become again. Then, indeed, the island enjoyed no little prosperity and importance, being a head centre and mart for the industry in negroes. Emancipation, however, wrecked Nevis, together with a good many other of the Antilles.

At Montpelier, on this island, Lord Nelson enjoyed his honeymoon, but now only a few trees and a little ruined masonry at the corner of a sugar-cane plantation appear to mark the spot. Further, it may be recorded, as a point in favour of the place, that it grows very exceptional Tangerine oranges. These, to taste in perfection, should be eaten at the turning point, before their skins grow yellow. We cannot judge of the noble possibilities in an orange at home. I brought back a dozen of these Nevis Tangerines with me, but I secretly suspected that, in spite of their fine reputation, quite inferior sorts would be able to beat them by the time they got to England; and it was so.

We stopped half-an-hour only at Charlestown, Nevis, and then proceeded to St. Christopher, a sister isle of greater size and scope.

At Antigua, there came aboard the "Rhine" a young man who implicitly leads us to understand that he is the most important person in the West Indies. He is the Governor of Antigua's own clerk, and is going to St. Christopher with a portmanteau, some walking-sticks, and a despatch-box. It appears that his significance is gigantic, and that, though the nominal seat of government lies at Antigua, yet the real active centre of political administration may be found immediately under the Panama hat

of the Governor's own clerk. This he takes the trouble to explain to us. The Governor himself is a puppet, his trusted men of resource and portfolio-holders are the veriest fantoccini; for the Governor's own clerk pulls the strings, frames the foreign policy, conducts, controls, adjusts difficulties, and maintains a right balance between the parties. This he condescends to make clear to us.

I ventured to ask him how many of the more important nations were involved with the matters at present in his despatch-box; and he said lightly, as though the concern in hand was a mere bagatelle, that only the United States, Great Britain and Germany were occupying his attention at the moment.

The Model Man said:

"I suppose you'll soon knock off a flea-bite like that?"

And the Governor's own clerk answered:

"Yes, I fancy so, unless any unforeseen hitch happens. Negotiations are pending."

I liked his last sentence particularly. It smacked so strongly of miles of red tape and months of official delay.

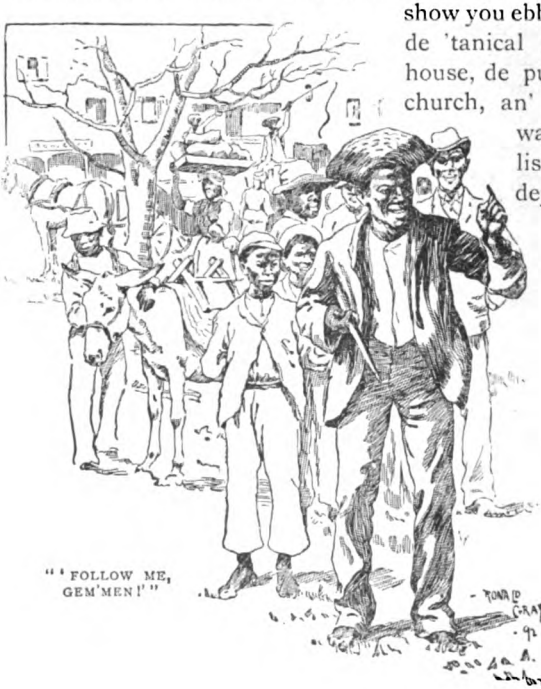
"THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN THE WEST INDIES."

When we reached St. Christopher, it was currently reported that the Governor's own clerk had simply come to settle a dispute between two negro landowners concerning a fragment of the island rather smaller than a table-napkin; but personally I doubt not this was a blind, under cover of which he secretly pushed forward those pending negotiations. He certainly had fine diplomatic instincts, and a sound view, from a political standpoint, of the value of veracity.

When we cast out anchor off Basseterre, St. Christopher, the Treasure hurried to me in some sorrow. He had proposed going ashore, with his Enchantress and her mother, to show them the sights, but now, to his dismay, he found that unforeseen official duties would keep him on the ship during our brief sojourn here. With anxiety almost pathetic, therefore, he entrusted the Enchantress to me, and commended her mother to the Doctor's care. I felt the compliment, and assured him that I would simply devote myself to her—platonically withal; but the Doctor was

not quite so hearty about her mother. However, he must behave like a gentleman, whether he felt inclined to do so or not, which the Treasure knew, and, therefore, felt safe.

Our party of four started straightway for a ramble in St. Kitts (as St. Christopher is more generally called), and, upon landing, we were happily met by a middle-aged negro, who had evidently watched our boat from afar. He tumbled off a pile of planks, where he had been basking in the sun, girt his indifferent raiment about him, and then, by sheer force of character, took complete command of our contemplated expedition. It may have been hypnotism, or some kindred mystery, but we were unresisting children in his hands. He said: "Follow me, gem'men: me show you ebb'ryting for nuffing: de 'tanical Garns, de prison-house, de public buildings, de church, an' all. Dis way, dis way, ladies. Don't listen to dem niggers; dey nobody on dis island."



"'FOLLOW ME, GEM'MEN!'"

The Doctor alone fought feebly, but it was useless, and, in two minutes, our masterful Ethiop had led us all away to see the sights.

"What's your name?" I asked.

"Jefferson, sar; ebb'rybody know Jefferson. Fus' we go to 'tanical Garns. Here dey is."

The Botanical Gardens of Basseterre, St. Kitts, were handsome, extensive, and well cared for. We wandered with pleasure down broad walks, shaded by cabbage palms and palmettos, mahogany and tamarind trees; we admired the fountain and varied foliage and blazing flower-beds, streaked and splashed with many brilliant blossoms and bright-leaved crotons.

"There," said the mother of the Enchantress, pointing to a handsome lily, "is a specimen of Crinum Asiaticum."

The Doctor started as though she had used a bad word. He hates a woman to know anything he does not, and this botanical display irritated him; but our attention was instantly distracted by Jefferson, who, upon hearing the lily admired, walked straight up to it and picked it.

I expostulated. I said:

"'THERE IS A SPECIMEN OF CRINUM ASIATICUM.'"

"You mustn't go plucking curiosities here, Jefferson, or you will get us all into hot water."

"Dat's right, massa," he replied. "Me an' de boss garner great ole frens. De ladies jus' say what dey like, an' Jefferson pick him off for dem."

He was as good as his word, and a fine theatrical display followed, as our party grew gradually bolder and bolder, and our guide, evidently upon his mettle, complied with each request in turn.

I will cast a fragment of the dialogue and action in dramatic form, so that you may the better judge of and picture that wild scene.

THE ENCHANTRESS *(timidly)*: Should you think we might have this tiny flower?

JEFFERSON: I pick him, missy. *(Does so.)*

THE DOCTOR: I wonder if they'd miss one of those red things? They've got a good number. I believe they're medicinal. Should you think—— ?

(Jefferson picks two of the flowers in question. The Doctor takes heart.)

THE MOTHER OF THE ENCHANTRESS: Dear me! Here's a singularly fine specimen ot the Somethingiensis. I wonder if you—— ?

(Jefferson picks it.)

"'MIGHT WE HAVE THAT?'"

THE DOCTOR: We might have that big affair there, hidden away behind those orange trees. Nobody will miss it. I should rather like it for my own.

(Jefferson wrestles with this concern, and the Doctor lends him a knife.)

THE ENCHANTRESS: Oh, there's a sweet, sweet blossom! Might we have that, and that bud, and that bunch of leaves next to them, Monsieur Jefferson?

(Jefferson, evidently feeling he is in for a hard morning's work, makes further on slaught upon the flora, and drags down three parts of an entire tree.)

THE MOTHER OF THE ENCHANTRESS: When you're done there, I will ask you to go into this fountain for one of those blue water-lilies.

(Jefferson, getting rather sick of it, pretends he does not hear.)

THE DOCTOR *(speaking in loud tones which Jefferson cannot ignore)*: Pick that, please, and that, and those things half-way up that tree.

(Jefferson begins to grow very hot and uneasy. He peeps about nervously, probably with a view to dodging his old friend, the head gardener.)

THE CHRONICLER *(feeling that his party is disgracing itself, and desiring to reprove them in a parable)*: I say, Jefferson, could you cut down that palm—the biggest of those two—and have it sent along to the ship? If the head gardener is here, he might help you.

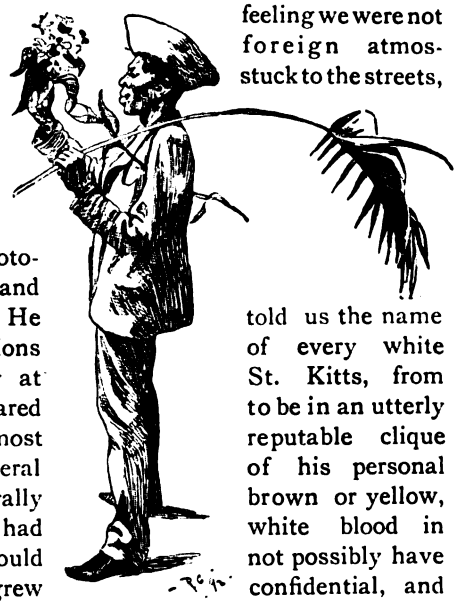
JEFFERSON *(losing his temper, missing the parable, and turning upon the Chronicler)*: No, sar! You no hab no more. I'se dam near pulled off ebb'ryting in de 'tanical Garns, an' I'se goin' right away now 'fore anyfing's said!

(Exit Jefferson rapidly, trying to conceal a mass of foliage under his ragged coat. The party follows him in single file.)

[*Curtain.*]

I doubt not that, had we met the head gardener just then, our guide would have lost a friend.

Henceforth, evidently feeling we were not wholly responsible in this foreign atmosphere of wonders, Jefferson stuck to the streets, and took us to churches and shops and other places where we had to control ourselves and leave things alone.



"'I'SE PULLED OFF EBB'RYTING IN THE 'TANICAL GARNS.'"

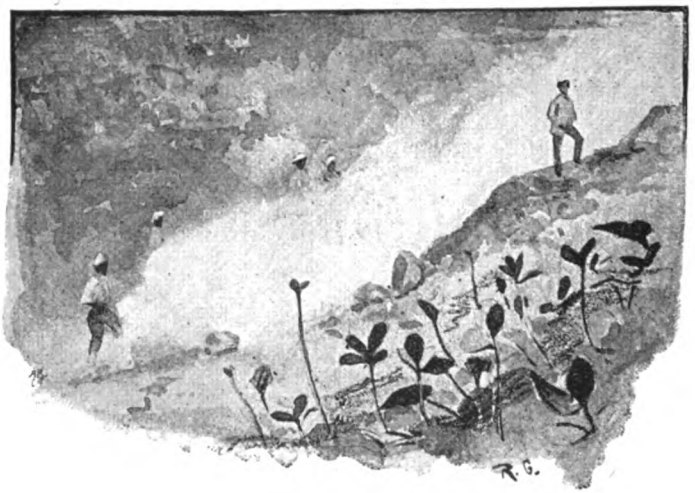
On the way to a photographer's he cooled down and became instructive again. He told us the name and address and bad actions of every white person we met. Society at St. Kitts, from his point of view, appeared to be in an utterly rotten condition. The most reputable clique was his own. We met several of his personal friends. They were generally brown or yellow, and he assured us that he had white blood in him too—a fact we could not possibly have guessed. Presently he grew confidential, and told us that his eldest son was a source of great discomfort to him. At the age of fifteen Jefferson Junior had run away from home and left St. Kitts to better himself at Barbados. Five years afterwards, however, when he had almost passed out of his parents' memory, so Jefferson declared, the young man returned, sick and penniless, to the home of his birth. I said here:

"This is the Prodigal Son story over again, Jefferson. Did you kill the fatted calf, I wonder, and make much of the lad?"

"No, sar," he answered; "didn't kill no fatted nuffing, but I precious near kill de podigal son."

Concerning St. Christopher, we have direct authority, from the immortal and ubiquitous Columbus himself, that it is an

island of exceptional advantages; for, delighted with its aspect in 1493, he bestowed his own name upon it. Indeed, the place has a beautiful and imposing appearance. Dark green forests and emerald tracts of sugar-cane now clothe its plains and hills; and Mount Misery, the loftiest peak, rises to a height of over four thousand feet. Caribs were the original inhabitants and possessors of St. Kitts, but when England and France agreed to divide this island between them in 1627, we find the local anthropophagi left out in the cold as usual. After bickering for about sixty years, the French enjoyed a temporary success, and



"VOLCANIC INDICATIONS."

slew their British brother colonists pretty generally. Then Fortune's wheel took a turn, and under the Peace of Utrecht, in 1713, St. Kitts became our property from strand to mountain-top.

There is only one road in this island, I am told, but that is thirty miles long, and extends all round the place. Volcanic indications occur freely on Mount Misery, and, as at Nevis, so here, the entire community may, some day, find itself very uncomfortably situated. A feature of St. Kitts is said to be monkeys, which occur in the woods. These, however, like the deer at Tobago, are more frequently heard of than seen. People were rather alarmed here, during our flying visit, by a form of influenza which settled upon the town of Basseterre; but we,

who had only lately come from England, and were familiar with the revolting lengths to which this malady will go in cold climes, reassured them, and laughed their puny tropical species to scorn. Finally, of St. Kitts, I would say: From information received in the first case, and from personal experience in the second, that there you shall find sugar culture in most approved and advanced perfection, and purchase walking-sticks of bewildering variety and beauty.

The ladies of our party decreed they had no wish to visit the gaol—a decision on their part which annoyed Jefferson considerably. He explained that the St. Kitts prison-house was, perhaps, better worth seeing than anything on the island; he also added that a book was kept there in which we should be invited to write our names and make remarks. They were proof, however, against even this inducement; and, having seen the church—a very English building, with homely little square tower—we left our Enchantress and her parent at the photographer's, to make such purchases as seemed good to them, and await our return.

"THE DOCTOR GREW DELIGHTED."

In this picture-shop, by the way, the Doctor grew almost boisterously delighted over a deplorable representation of negro lepers. Young and old, male and female, halt and maimed, the poor sufferers had been photographed in a long row; and my brother secured the entire panorama of them and whined for more. These lamentable representations of lepers gave him keener pleasure than anything he had seen since we left the Trinidad Hospital. In future, when we reached a new port, he would always hurry off to photographers' shops, where they existed, and simply clamour for lepers.

I asked Jefferson, as we proceeded to the prison, whether he thought we should be allowed to peer about among the inner secrets of the place, and he answered: "You see ebb'ryting, sar; de head p'liceman great ole fren' of mine."

My brother said:

"You seem to know all the best people in St. Kitts, Jefferson."

And he admitted that it was so. He replied:

"Jefferson 'quainted wid ebb'rybody, an' ebb'rybody 'quainted wid Jefferson."

Which put his position in a nutshell.

The prison was not very impressive viewed from outside, being but a mere mean black and white building, with outer walls which experienced criminals at home would have smiled at. We rang a noisy bell, and were allowed to enter upon the demand of Jefferson.

Four sinners immediately met our gaze. They sat pensively breaking stones in a wide courtyard. A building, with barred windows, threw black shade upon the blazing white ground of this open space; and here, shielded from the sun, the convicts reclined and made a show of work. Jefferson, with rather a lack of delicate feeling, drew up before this little stone-breaking party and beamed upon it. The Doctor and I walked past and tried to look as though we saw nobody, but our guide did not choose that we should miss the most interesting thing in the place thus.

"Look har, gem'men; see dese prisoners breakin' stones."

"All right, all right," answered my brother; "push on; don't stand staring there. We haven't come to gloat over those poor devils."

But I really think the culprits were as disappointed as Jefferson. They evidently felt that they were the most important part of the entire spectacle, and rather resented being passed over.

"You won't see no more prisoners, if you don't look at dese, sar," answered Jefferson. "Dar's only terrible few convics in de gaol jus' now."

"So much the better," answered the unsympathetic Doctor.

It certainly appeared to be a most lonely and languishing place of incarceration. We inspected the cells, and observed in one of them a peculiar handle fastened against the wall. This proved to be a West Indian substitute for the treadmill. The turning of the handle can be made easy or difficult by an arrangement of screws without the cell. The affair is set for a certain number of revolutions, and a warder explained to us that where hard labour

has been meted to a prisoner, he spends long, weary hours struggling with this apparatus and earning his meals. When the necessary number of turns are completed, a bell rings, and one can easily picture the relief in many an erring black man's heart upon the sound of it. At another corner of the courtyard was piled a great heap of cannon-balls. These were used for shot-drill—an arduous form of exercise calculated to tame the wildest spirit and break the strongest back. The whitewashed cells were wonderfully clean and wholesome—more so, in fact, than most public apartments I saw elsewhere in the West Indies. This effect may be produced in some measure by the absolute lack of household goods and utensils, pictures or *bric-à-brac*. In fact, the only piece of furniture I could find anywhere was a massive wooden tripod, used for flogging prisoners upon.

"A CHAT WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT."

Then we went in to have a chat with the Superintendent. He was rather nervous and downcast, and apparently feared that we had formed a poor opinion of his gaol. He apologised quite humbly for the paucity of prisoners, and explained that times were bad, and there was little or nothing doing in the criminal world of St. Kitts. He really did not know what had come to the place lately. He perfectly remembered, in the good old days, having had above fifty prisoners at a time in his hands. Why, blacks had been hung there before now. But of late days business grew to be a mere farce. It anybody did do anything of a capitally criminal nature at St. Kitts, during the next twenty years or so, he very much doubted if the authorities would permit him to carry the affair

through. His opinion was that an assassin would be taken away altogether and bestowed upon Antigua. I asked him how he accounted for such a stagnation in crime, and he answered, rather bitterly, that the churches and chapels and Moravian missions had to be thanked for it. There were far too many of them. Ordinary human instincts were frustrated at every turn. Little paltry sects of nobodies filled their tin meeting-houses Sunday after Sunday, and yet an important Government institution, like the gaol, remained practically empty. He could not understand it. At the rate things were going, it would be necessary to shut his prison up altogether in a year's time. Certainly, one of his present charges —a man he felt proud of in every way—was sentenced to penal servitude for life, and had only lately made a determined attempt to escape. But he could hardly expect the Government to keep up an entire gaol, with warders and a Superintendent and everything, for one man, however wicked he might be. I tried to cheer him up, and spoke hopefully about the natural depravity of everything human. I said:

"FILLED HALF A PAGE WITH COMPLIMENTARY CRITICISM."

"You must look forward. The Powers of Evil are by no means played out yet. Black sheep occur in every fold. After periods of drought, seasons of great plenty frequently ensue. There should be magnificent raw material in this island, which will presently mature and keep you as busy as a bee."

"Dar's my son, too," said Jefferson, encouragingly; "I'se pretty sure you hab him 'fore long."

Then the man grew slightly more sanguine, and asked if we should care to sign his book. and make a few remarks in it before departing.

"Of course I know it's only a small prison at best," he said, deferentially.

"As to that," answered the Doctor, speaking for himself, "I have certainly been in a great many bigger ones, but never in any house of detention better conducted and cleaner kept than

yours. You deserve more ample recognition. I should judge you to be a man second to none in your management of malefactors. For my part, I will assuredly write this much in your book."

The volume was produced, and my brother sat down and expatiated about the charms and advantages of St. Kitts prison-house. He filled half a page with complimentary and irresponsible criticism; then he handed the book to me. The Superintendent said that he should take it as particularly kind if, in my remarks, I would insert a good word for the drainage system. Advised by the Doctor that I might do so with truth and justice, I wrote as follows:

"A remarkably clean, ably-managed, and well-ordered establishment, with an admirable staff of officials, a gratifying scarcity of evil-doers, and particularly happy sanitary arrangements."

"SALUTING HIS MANY FRIENDS."

Then we went off to rejoin the Enchantress and her mother, and see further sights during the brief time which now remained at our disposal. The ladies had completed their purchases, and with them we now traversed extended portions of the town, and visited a negro colony, where thatched roofs peeped out from among tattered plantain leaves, and rustic cottages hid in the shade of tamarind and orange, lime and cocoanut. The lazy folks lounged about, chewing sugar-cane and munching bananas, according to their pleasant custom. The men chattered, and the women prattled and played with their yellow and ebony babies. One saw no ambition, no proper pride, no obtrusive morality anywhere. Jefferson appeared to be a personage in these parts. He marched along saluting his many friends and smoking a cigar which the Doctor had given him. He stopped occasionally to crack a joke or offer advice; and when we came to any negro or negress whose history embraced a matter of interest, Jefferson would stop and lecture upon the subject, while he or she stood and

grinned and admitted his remarks were unquestionably true. As a rule, instead of grinning, they ought to have wept, for Jefferson's anecdotes and scraps of private scandals led me to fear that about ninety-nine in a hundred of his cronies ought to be under lock and key, in spite of what the prison authorities had told us.

Then we came down through a slum and found ourselves by the sea, upon a long, level beach of dark sand. The pier stood half-a-mile ahead, and we now determined to proceed without further delay to the boats, return to the "Rhine," and safely bestow our curiosities before she sailed. Apprised of this intention, Jefferson prepared to take leave of our party. He assured me that it had given him very considerable pleasure to thus devote his morning hours to our service. He trusted that we were satisfied with his efforts, and hinted that, though he should not dream of levying any formal charge, yet some trifling and negotiable memento of us would not be misunderstood or give him the least offence. We rewarded him adequately, thanked him much for all his trouble, and hoped that, when next we visited St. Kitts, his cheerful face might be the first to meet us. He answered:

"Please God, gem'men, I be at de pier-head when next you come 'long. Anyhow, you ask for Jefferson." Then, blessing us without stint, he departed.

And here I am reluctantly compelled to reprove the white and tawny-coloured inhabitants of St. Kitts for a breach of good manners. Boat-loads of gentlemen from shore crowded the "Rhine," like locusts, during her short stay at this island. They inundated the saloon bar, scrambled for seats at the luncheon-table, and showed a wild eagerness to eat and drink for nothing, which was most unseemly. One would have imagined that these worthy folks only enjoyed a hearty meal upon the occasional visits of a steamer; for after they had done with us they all rowed off to a neighbouring vessel, and boarded her in like manner, swarming up her sides to see what they could devour. That the intelligent male population of an island should come off to the ships, and chat with acquaintances and hear the latest news and enlarge its mind, is rational enough; but that it should organise greedy raids upon the provisions, and get in the way of the crew and passengers, and eat up refreshments which it is not justified in even approaching, appears to me unrefined, if not absolutely vulgar.

Leprosy and gluttony are the prevailing disorders at St. Kitts. The first is, unfortunately, incurable, but the second might easily

be remedied, and should be. All that the white inhabitants need is a shade more self-control in the matter of other people's food, then they will be equal to the best of their brothers at home or abroad.

That afternoon the subject of influenza formed a principal theme in the smoking-room of the "Rhine." Our Fourth Officer said:

"Probably I am better qualified to discuss it than any of you men; for, two years ago, I had a most violent attack of Russian influenza *in* Russia. Mere English, suburban influenza is child's-play by comparison. I suffered at Odessa on the Black Sea, and my temperature went up to just under two hundred, and I singed the bed-clothes. A friend of mine, an old shipmate, had it at the same place; and his temperature went considerably over two hundred, and he set his bed-clothes on fire and was burnt to death, being too weak to escape."

This reminiscence would seem to show that our Fourth Officer has at last exhausted his supplies of facts, and will now no doubt fall back on reserves of fiction; which, judged from this sample, are probably very extensive. Though few mariners turn novelists, yet it is significant, as showing the great bond of union between seafaring life and pure imagination, that those who have done so can point to most gratifying results.

"'PROBABLY I AM BETTER QUALIFIED TO DISCUSS IT THAN ANY OF YOU'"

I. ZANGWILL.

My First Book

By I. Zangwill.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.

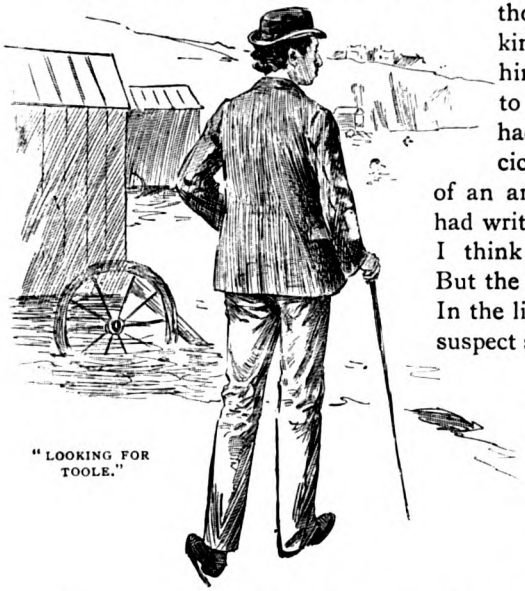
AS it is scarcely two years since my name (which, I hear, is a *nom de plume*) appeared in print on the cover of a book, I may be suspected of professional humour when I say I really do not know which was my first book. Yet such is the fact. My literary career has been so queer that I find it not easy to write my autobibliography.

"What is a pound?" asked Sir Robert Peel in an interrogative mood futile as Pilate's. "What is a book?" I ask, and the dictionary answers with its usual dogmatic air, "A collection of sheets of paper, or similar material, blank, written, or printed, bound together." At this rate my first book would be that romance of school life in two volumes, which, written in a couple of exercise books, circulated gratuitously in the schoolroom, and pleased our youthful imaginations with teacher-baiting tricks we had not the pluck to carry out in the actual. I shall always remember this story because, after making the tour of the class, it was returned to me with thanks and a new first page from which all my graces of style had evaporated. Indignant enquiry discovered the criminal—he admitted he had lost the page, and had rewritten it from memory. He pleaded that it was better written (which in one sense was true), and that none of the facts had been omitted.

This ill-treated tale was "published" when I was ten, but an old schoolfellow recently wrote to me reminding me of an earlier novel written in an old account book. Of this I have no recollection, but, as he says he wrote it day by day at my dictation, I suppose he ought to know. I am glad to find I had so early achieved the distinction of keeping an amanuensis.

The dignity of print I achieved not much later, contributing verses and virtuous essays to various juvenile organs. But it was not till I was eighteen that I achieved a printed first book. The story of this first book is peculiar; and, to tell it in approved story form, I must request the reader to come back two years with me.

One fine day, when I was sixteen, I was wandering about the Ramsgate sands looking for Toole. I did not really expect to see him, and I had no reason to believe he was in Ramsgate, but I thought if providence were kind to him it might throw him in my way. I wanted to do him a good turn. I had written a three-act farcical comedy at the request of an amateur dramatic club. I had written out all the parts, and I think there were rehearsals. But the play was never produced. In the light of after knowledge I suspect some of those actors must have been of quite professional calibre. You understand, therefore, why my thoughts turned to Toole. But I could not find Toole. Instead, I found on the sands a page of a paper called *Society*. It is still running merrily at a penny, but at that time it had also a Saturday edition at threepence. On this page was a great prize-competition scheme, as well as details of a regular weekly competition. The competitions in those days were always literary and intellectual, but then popular education had not made such strides as to-day.



"LOOKING FOR TOOLE."

I sat down on the spot, and wrote something which took a prize in the weekly competition. This emboldened me to enter for the great stakes.

There were various events. I resolved to enter for two. One was a short novel, and the other a comedietta. The "£5 humorous story" competition I did not go in

"I SAT DOWN AND WROTE SOMETHING."

for; but when the last day of sending in MSS. for that had passed, I reproached myself with not having despatched one of my manuscripts. Modesty had prevented me sending in old work, as I felt assured it would stand no chance, but when it was too late I was annoyed with myself for having thrown away a possibility. After all I could have lost nothing. Then I discovered that I had mistaken the last date, and that there was still a day. In the joyful reaction I selected a story called "Professor Grimmer," and sent it in. Judge of my amazement when this got the prize (£5), and was published in serial form, running through three numbers of *Society*. Last year, at a press dinner, I found myself next to Mr. Arthur Goddard, who told me he had acted as Competition Editor, and that quite a number of now well-known people had taken part in these admirable competitions. My painfully laboured novel only got honourable mention, and my comedietta was lost in the post.

Arthur Goddard

But I was now at the height of literary fame, and success stimulated me to fresh work. I still marvel when I think of the amount of rubbish I turned out in my seventeenth and eighteenth years, in the scanty leisure of a harassed pupil-teacher at an elementary school, working hard in the evenings for a degree at the London University to boot. There was a fellow pupil-teacher (let us call him Y.) who believed in me, and who had a little money with which to back his belief. I was for starting a comic paper. The name was to be *Grimaldi*, and I was to write it all every week.

"But don't you think your invention would give way ultimately?" asked Y. It was the only time he ever doubted me.

"By that time I shall be able to afford a staff," I replied triumphantly

Y. was convinced. But before the comic paper was born, Y.

had another happy thought. He suggested that if I wrote a Jewish story, we might make enough to finance the comic paper. I was quite willing. If he had suggested an epic, I should have written it.

So I wrote the story in four evenings (I always write in spurts), and within ten days from the inception of the idea the booklet was on sale in a coverless pamphlet form. The printing cost ten pounds I paid five (the five I had won), Y. paid five, and we divided the profits. He has since not become a publisher.

My first book (price one penny nett) went well. It was loudly denounced by Jews, and widely bought by them; it was hawked about the streets. One little shop in Whitechapel sold four hundred copies. It was even on Smith's bookstalls. There was great curiosity among Jews to know the name of the writer. Owing to my anonymity, I was enabled to see those enjoying its perusal, who were afterwards to explain to me their horror and disgust at its illiteracy and vulgarity. By vulgarity vulgar Jews mean the reproduction of the Hebrew words with which the poor and the old-fashioned interlard their conversation. It is as if English-speaking Scotchmen and Irishmen should object to "dialect" novels reproducing the idiom of their "uncultured" countrymen. I do not possess a copy of my first book, but somehow or other I discovered the MS. when writing *Children of the Ghetto*. The description of market-day in Jewry was transferred bodily from the MS. of my first book, and is now generally admired.

"IT WAS HAWKED ABOUT THE STREETS."

What the profits were I never knew, for they were invested in the second of our publications. Still jealously keeping the authorship secret, we published a long comic ballad which I had

written on the model of Bab. With this we determined to launch out in style, and so we had gorgeous advertisement posters printed in three colours, which were to be stuck about London to beautify that great dreary city. Y. saw the back-hair of Fortune almost within our grasp.

One morning our headmaster walked into my room with a portentously solemn air. I felt instinctively that the murder was out. But he only said "Where is Y.?" though the mere coupling of our names was ominous, for our publishing partnership was unknown. I replied, "How should I know? In his room, I suppose."

He gave me a peculiar sceptical glance.

"When did you last see Y.?" he said.

"Yesterday afternoon," I replied wonderingly.

"And you don't know where he is now?"

"Haven't an idea—isn't he in school?"

"No," he replied in low, awful tones.

"Where then?" I murmured.

"*In prison!*"

"In prison," I gasped.

"In prison; I have just been to help bail him out."

"A POLICEMAN TOLD HIM TO GET DOWN."

It transpired that Y. had suddenly been taken with a further happy thought. Contemplation of those gorgeous tricoloured posters had turned his brain, and, armed with an amateur paste-pot and a ladder, he had sallied forth at midnight to stick them about the silent streets, so as to cut down the publishing expenses. A policeman, observing him at work, had told him to get down, and Y., being legal-minded, had argued it out with the policeman *de haut en bas* from the top of his ladder. The outraged majesty of the law thereupon haled Y. off to the cells.

Naturally the cat was now out of the bag, and the fat in the fire.

To explain away the poster was beyond the ingenuity of even a professed fiction-monger.

Straightway the committee of the school was summoned in hot haste, and held debate upon the scandal of a pupil-teacher being guilty of originality. And one dread afternoon, when all Nature seemed to hold its breath, I was called down to interview a member of the committee. In his hand were copies of the obnoxious publications.

I approached the great person with beating heart. He had been kind to me in the past, singling me out, on account of some scholastic successes, for an annual vacation at the sea-side. It has only just struck me, after all these years, that, if he had not done so, I should not have found the page of *Society*, and so not have perpetrated the deplorable compositions.

"'SUCH STUFF AS LITTLE BOYS SCRIBBLE UP ON WALLS.'"

In the course of a bad quarter of an hour, he told me that the ballad was tolerable, though not to be endured; he admitted the metre was perfect, and there wasn't a single false rhyme. But the prose novelette was disgusting. "It is such stuff," said he, "as little boys scribble up on walls."

I said I could not see anything objectionable in it.

"Come now, confess you are ashamed of it," he urged. "You only wrote it to make money."

"If you mean that I deliberately wrote low stuff to make money," I replied calmly, "it is untrue. There is nothing I am ashamed of. What you object to is simply realism." I pointed out Bret Harte had been as realistic, but they did not understand literature on that committee.

"Confess you are ashamed of yourself," he reiterated, "and we will look over it."

"I am not," I persisted, though I foresaw only too clearly that

my summer's vacation was doomed if I told the truth. "What is the use of saying I am?"

The headmaster uplifted his hands in horror. "How, after all your kindness to him, he can contradict you——!" he cried.

"When I come to be your age," I conceded to the member of the committee, "it is possible I may look back on it with shame. At present I feel none."

In the end I was given the alternative of expulsion or of publishing nothing which had not passed the censorship of the committee. After considerable hesitation I chose the latter.

This was a blessing in disguise; for, as I have never been able to endure the slightest arbitrary interference with my work, I simply abstained from publishing. Thus, although I still wrote —mainly sentimental verses—my nocturnal studies were less interrupted. Not till I had graduated, and was of age, did I return to my inky vomit. Then came my next first book—a real book at last.

In this also I had the collaboration of a fellow-teacher, Louis Cowen by name. This time my colleague was part-author. It was only gradually that I had been admitted to the privilege of communion with him, for he was my senior by five or six years, and a man of brilliant parts who had already won his spurs in journalism, and who enjoyed deservedly the reputation of an Admirable Crichton. What drew me to him was his mordant wit (to-day, alas! wasted on anonymous journalism! If he would only reconsider his indetermination, the reading public would be the richer!) Together we planned plays, novels, treatises on political economy, and contributions to philosophy. Those were the days of dreams.

One afternoon he came to me with quivering sides, and told me that an idea for a little shilling book had occurred to him. It was that a Radical Prime Minister and a Conservative working man should change into each other by supernatural means, and the working man be confronted with the problem of governing, while the Prime Minister should be as comically out of place in the East End environment. He thought it would make a funny "Arabian Nights" sort of burlesque. And so it would have done; but, unfortunately, I saw subtler possibilities of political satire in it. I insisted the story must be real, not supernatural, the Prime Minister must be a Tory, weary of office, and it must be an ultra-Radical atheistic artisan bearing a marvellous resemblance to him who directs (and with complete success) the Conservative Adminis-

tration. To add to the mischief, owing to my collaborator's evenings being largely taken up by other work, seven-eighths of the book came to be written by me, though the leading ideas were, of course, threshed out and the whole revised in common, and thus

LIFE IN BETHNAL GREEN.

it became a vent-hole for all the ferment of a youth of twenty-one, whose literary faculty had furthermore been pent up for years by the potential censorship of a committee. The book, instead of being a shilling skit, grew to a ten-and-sixpenny (for that was the unfortunate price of publication) political treatise of over sixty long

chapters and 500 closely-printed pages. I drew all the characters as seriously and complexly as if the fundamental conception were a matter of history; the out-going Premier became an elaborate study of a nineteenth century Hamlet; the Bethnal Green life amid which he came to live was presented with photographic fulness and my old trick of realism; the governmental manœuvres were described with infinite detail; numerous real personages were introduced under nominal disguises, and subsequent history was curiously anticipated in some of the Female Franchise and Home Rule episodes. Worst of all, so super-subtle was the satire, that it was never actually stated straight out that the Premier had changed places with the Radical working man, so that the door might be left open for satirically suggested alternative explanations of the metamorphosis in their characters; and as, moreover, the two men re-assumed their original *rôles* for one night only with infinitely complex effects, many readers, otherwise unimpeachable, reached the end without any suspicion of the actual plot —and yet (on their own confession) enjoyed the book!

"HAD IT SENT ROUND."

In contrast to all this elephantine waggery the half-a-dozen chapters near the commencement, in which my collaborator sketched the first adventures of the Radical working man in Downing Street, were light and sparkling, and I feel sure the shilling skit he originally meditated would have been a great success. We christened the book *The Premier and the Painter*, ourselves J. Freeman Bell, had it type-written, and sent it round to the publishers in two enormous quarto volumes. I had been working at it for more than a year every evening after the hellish torture of the day's teaching, and all day every holiday, but now I had a good rest while it was playing its boomerang prank of returning to me once a month. The only gleam of hope came from Bentleys, who wrote to say that they could not make up their minds to reject it; but they prevailed upon themselves to part with it at last, though not without asking to see Mr. Bell's next book. At last it was accepted by Spencer Blackett, and,

though it had been refused by all the best houses, it failed. Failed in a material sense, that is; for there was plenty of praise in the papers, though at too long intervals to do us any good. The *Athenæum* has never spoken so well of anything I have done since. The late James Runciman (I learnt after his death that it was he) raved about it in various uninfluential organs. It even called forth a leader in the *Family Herald (!)*, and there are odd people here and there, who know the secret of J. Freeman Bell, who declare that I. Zangwill will never do anything so good. There was some sort of a cheap edition, but it did not sell much, and when, some years ago, Spencer Blackett went out of business, I acquired the copyright and the remainder copies, which are still lying about somewhere. And not only did *The Premier and the Painter* fail with the great public, it did not even help either of us one step up the ladder; never got us a letter of encouragement nor a stroke of work. I had to begin journalism at the very bottom and entirely unassisted, narrowly escaping canvassing for advertisements, for I had by this time thrown up my scholastic position, and had gone forth into the world penniless and without even a "character," branded as an Atheist (because I did not worship the Lord who presided over our committee) and a Revolutionary (because I refused to break the law of the land).

I should stop here if I were certain I had written the required article. But as *The Premier and the Painter* was not entirely *my* first book, I may perhaps be expected to say something of my third first book, and the first to which I put my name—*The Bachelors' Club*. Years of literary apathy succeeded the failure of *The Premier and the Painter*. All I did was to publish a few serious poems (which, I hope, will survive *Time*), a couple of pseudonymous stories signed "The Baroness Von S." (!), and a long philosophical essay upon religion, and to lend a hand in the writing of a few playlets. Becoming convinced of the irresponsible mendacity of the dramatic profession, I gave up the stage, too, vowing never to write except on commission, and sank entirely into the slough of journalism (glad enough to get there), *inter alia* editing a comic paper (not *Grimaldi*, but *Ariel*) with a heavy heart. At last the long apathy wore off, and I resolved to cultivate literature again in my scraps of time. It is a mere accident that I wrote a pair of "funny" books, or put serious criticism of contemporary manners into a shape not understood in a country where only the dull are profound and only the ponderous are earnest. *The Bachelors' Club* was the result of a whimsical

remark made by my dear friend, Eder of Bartholomew's, with whom I was then sharing rooms in Bernard Street, and who helped me greatly with it, and its publication was equally accidental. One spring day, in the year of grace 1891, having lived unsuccessfully for a score of years and seven upon this

MR. ZANGWILL AT WORK.

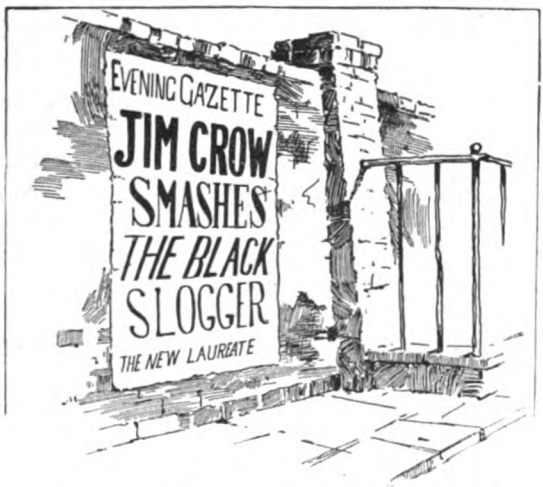
absurd planet, I crossed Fleet Street and stepped into what is called "success." It was like this. Mr. J. T. Grein, now of the Independent Theatre, meditated a little monthly called *The Playgoers' Review*, and he asked me to do an article for the first number, on the strength of some speeches I had made at

the Playgoers' Club. When I got the proof it was marked "Please return at once to 6, Bouverie Street." My office boy being out, and Bouverie Street being only a few steps away, I took it over myself, and found myself, somewhat to my surprise, in the office of Henry & Co., publishers, and in the presence of Mr. J. Hannaford Bennett, an active partner in the firm. He greeted me by name, also to my surprise, and told me he had heard me speak at the Playgoers' Club. A little conversation ensued, and he mentioned that his firm was going to bring out a Library of Wit and Humour. I told him I had begun a book, avowedly humorous, and had written two chapters of it, and he straightway came over to my office, heard me read them, and immediately secured the book. (The then editor ultimately refused to have it in the "Whitefriars'

"EDITING A COMIC PAPER."

Library of Wit and Humour," and so it was brought out separately.) Within three months, working in odds and ends of time, I finished it, correcting the proofs of the first chapters while I was writing the last; indeed, ever since the day I read those two chapters to Mr. Hannaford Bennett I have never written a line anywhere that has not been purchased before it was written. For, to my undying astonishment, two average editions of my real "First Book" were disposed of on the day of publication, to say nothing of the sale in New York. Unless I had acquired a reputation of which I was totally unconscious, it must have been the title that "fetched" the trade. Or, perhaps, it was the illustrations by my friend, Mr. George Hutchinson, whom I am proud to have discovered as a cartoonist for *Ariel*.

So here the story comes to a nice sensational climax. Re-reading it, I feel dimly that there ought to be a moral in it somewhere for the benefit of struggling fellow-scribblers. But the best I can find is this: That if you are blessed with some talent, a great deal of industry, and an amount of conceit mighty enough to enable you to disregard superiors, equals and critics, as well as the fancied demands of the public, it is possible, without friends, or introductions, or bothering celebrities to read your manuscripts, or cultivating the camp of the log-rollers, to attain, by dint of slaving day and night for years during the flower of your youth, to a fame infinitely less widespread than a prize-fighter's, and a pecuniary position which you might with far less trouble have been born to.



"A FAME LESS WIDESPREAD THAN A PRIZEFIGHTER'S"

By the Light of the Lamp.

By Hilda Newman.

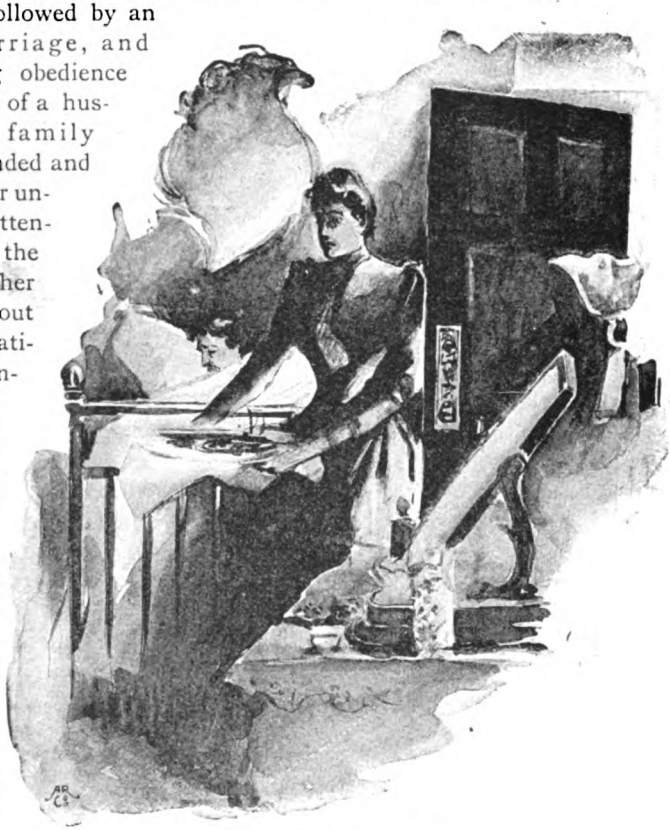
Illustrations by Hal Hurst.

A DAY in bed! Oh! the horror of it to a man who has never ailed anything in his life! A day away from the excitement (pleasurable or otherwise) of business, the moving throng of city streets, the anticipated chats with business friends and casual acquaintances—the world of men. Nothing to look upon but the four walls of the room, which, in spite of its cosiness, he only associates with dreams, nightmares, and dull memories of sleepless nights, and chilly mornings. Nothing to listen to but the twittering of the canary downstairs, and the distant wrangling of children in the nursery: no one to speak to but the harassed housewife, wanted in a dozen places at once, and the pert housemaid, whose noisiness is distracting. The man lay there, cursing his helplessness. In spite of his iron will, the unseen enemy, who had stolen in by night, conquered, holding him down with a hundred tingling fingers when he attempted to rise, and drawing a misty veil over his eyes when he tried to read, till at last he was forced to resign himself, with closed eyes, and turn day into night. But the lowered blind was a sorry substitute for the time of rest, and brought him no light, refreshing sleep, so, in the spirit, he occupied his customary chair at the office, writing and receiving cheques, drawing up new circulars, and ordering the clerks about in the abrupt, peremptory manner he thought proper to adopt towards subordinates—the wife included.

He tortured himself by picturing the disorganisation of the staff in his enforced absence—for he had grown to believe that nothing could prosper without his personal supervision, though the head clerk had been ten years in his employ. Then he remembered an important document, that should have been signed before, and a foreign letter, which probably awaited him, and fretted himself into a fever of impatience and aggravation.

Just at the climax of his reflections his wife entered the room. She was a silent little woman, with weary eyes. Perhaps her burden of household cares, and the complaints of an exacting husband, had made her prematurely old, for there were already

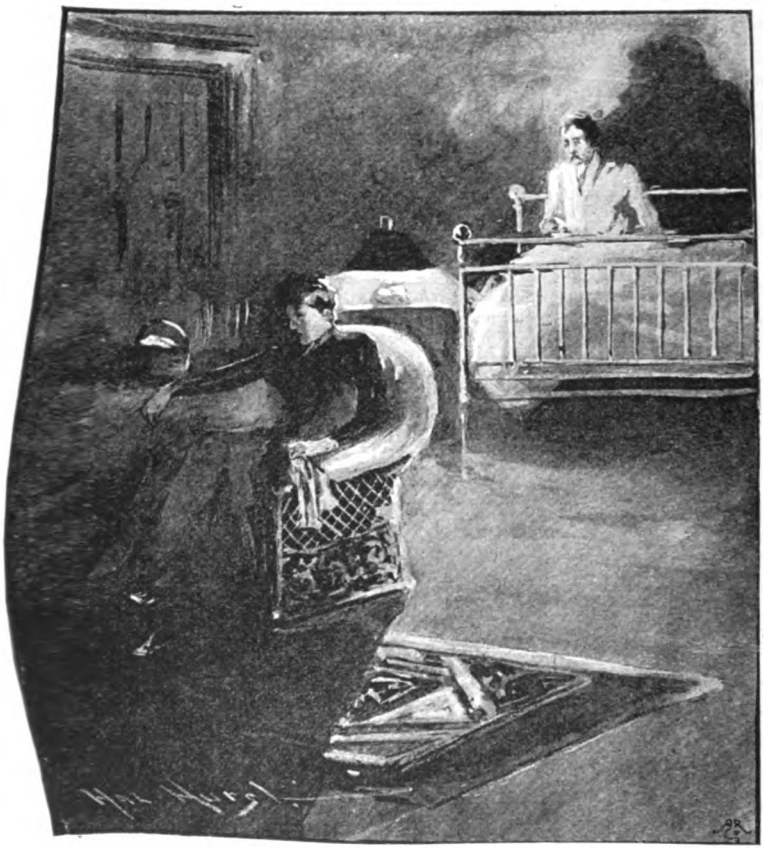
silver threads among the dark brown coils of hair that were neatly twisted in a bygone fashion, though she was young enough to have had a bright colour in her cheek, a merry light in her dark eyes, and a smile on her lips. These, and a becoming dress, would have made her a pretty woman; but a friendless, convent girlhood, followed by an early marriage, and unswerving obedience to the calls of a husband and family who demanded and accepted her unceasing attention and the sacrifice of her youth, without a word of gratitude or sympathy, had made her what she was — a plain, insignificant, faded-looking creature, with unsatisfied yearnings, and heart-aches that she did not betray, fearing to be misunderstood or ridiculed.



"RETURNING WITH A DAINTILY-SPREAD TRAY."

She listened quietly to his complaints, and bore without reproach his mocking answers to her offers of help. Then she softly drew up the blind, and went downstairs, returning with a daintily-spread tray. But the tempting oysters she had had such trouble to procure were pettishly refused, and the tray was not even allowed to be in the room. The wife sat down near the

window, and took up a little garment she was making—her face was flushed, and her lips trembled as she stitched and folded—it seemed so hard that she could do nothing to please him, knowing, as she did, that he considered hers an idle life, since they kept servants to do the work of the house. He did not know of her



"FAST ASLEEP IN THE LOW WICKER ARMCHAIR."

heart-breaking attempts to keep within the limits of her weekly allowance, with unexpected calls from the nursery, and kitchen breakages; he forgot that it would not go so far now that there were more children to clothe and feed, and, when she gently hinted this, he hurled the bitter taunt of extravagance at her, not

dreaming that she was really pinched for money, and stinting herself of a hundred and one things necessary to her comfort and well-being for the sake of her family. Indeed, it was part of his theory never to yield to requests of this kind, since they were sure to be followed by others at no distant date, and, besides, he greatly prided himself on firmness in domestic matters.

She was very worried to-day; anxious about her husband's health, and sorely grieved at the futility of all her efforts to interest or help him. Great tears gathered in her eyes, and were ready to fall, but they had to be forced back, for she was called out of the room again.

And so it went on throughout the afternoon—in and out—up and down—never resting—never still—her thoughts always with the discontented invalid, who fell asleep towards evening, after a satisfactory meal, cooked and served by his patient helpmate, and eaten in a desultory manner, as if its speedier consumption would imply too much appreciation of her culinary kindness.

About midnight he awoke, refreshed in body and mind, and singularly clear of brain.

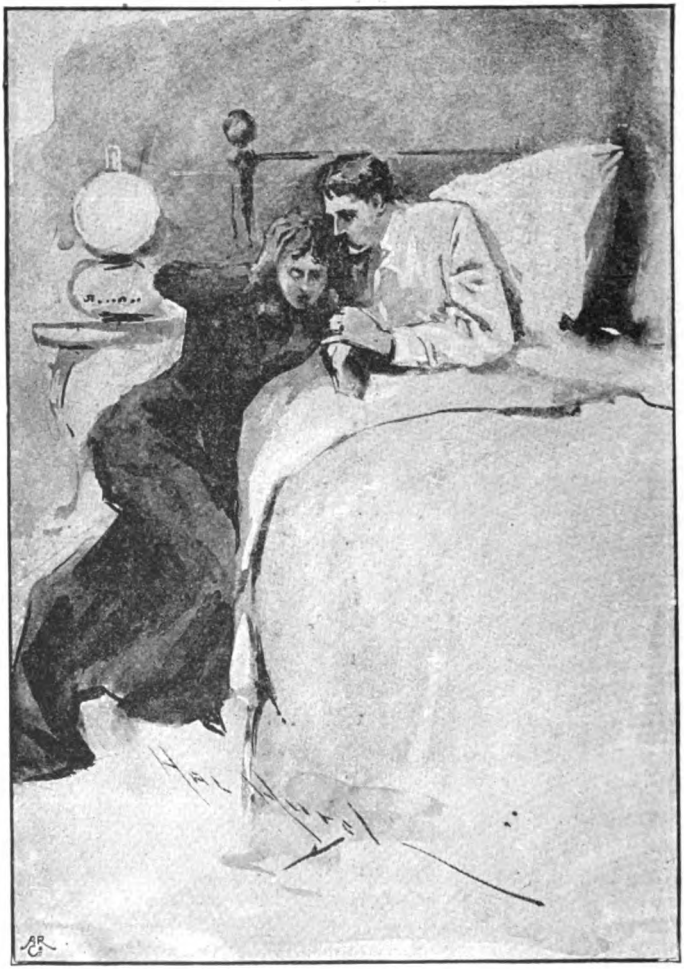
His first feeling was one of intense relief, for he felt quite free from pain, and to-morrow would find him in town, writing and scolding—in short, himself again. He sat up in bed, and looked round. The gas was turned low, but on a little table consecrated to his wants stood a carefully-shaded lamp. By its soft light he discovered his wife, fast asleep in the low, wicker armchair, whose gay chintz cover contrasted strangely with her neat dark dress. She had evidently meant to sit up all night in case he felt worse, but had succumbed from sheer weariness, still grasping the tiny frock she had been mending. He noticed her roughened fore-finger, but excused it, when he saw the little, even stitches. Finally, he decided not to disturb her, but, as he settled down again on the comfortable pillow, he was haunted by the image of her pale face, and, raising himself on his elbow, looked at her again, reflectively. She was certainly very white.

He blamed the lamplight at first, but his conscience spoke clearly in the dim silence, as he recalled her anxiety for him, and her gentle, restless footsteps on the stairs, and, now that he began to think of it, she had not eaten all day. He scolded her severely for it in his mind. Was there not plenty for her if she wanted it?

But that inner self would not be silenced. "How about her idle life?" it said—"has she had time to eat to-day?"

He could not answer.

She sighed in her sleep, and her lashes were wet as from recent tears. For the first time he noticed the silver hairs, and the lines about her eyes, and wondered at them.



"SOBBING OUT YEARS OF LONELINESS."

And the still, small voice pierced his heart, saying, "Whose fault is it?"

As he shut his eyes—vainly endeavouring to dismiss the unwelcome thoughts that came crowding in upon his mind, and

threatened to destroy his belief in the perfect theory he loved to expound—a past day rose before him. He held her hand, and, looking into her timid, girlish face, said to himself, "I can mould her to my will." Then she came to him, alone and friendless, with no one to help hide her inexperience and nervousness.

He recalled the gentle questions he was always too busy to answer, till they troubled him no more; and the silent reproach of her quivering lips when he blamed her for some little household error. And, though he believed that his training had made her useful and independent, he remembered, with a pang of remorse, many occasions on which an affectionate word of appreciation had hovered on his tongue, and wondered what foolish pride or reserve had made him hesitate and choke it down, when he knew what it meant to her. Birthdays, and all those little anniversaries which stand out clearly on the calendar of a woman's heart, he had forgotten, or remembered only when the time for wishes and kisses was over. Yet he had never reproached himself for this before. But to-day he had seen enough to understand something of the responsibility that rested on her, the ignorance of the servants, the healthy, clamouring children, who would only obey *her*, and the hundred and one daily incidents that would have worried him into a frenzy, but which only left her serene and patient, and anxious to do her duty. The poor wan face had grown lovely to him, and the lines on her forehead spoke with an eloquence beyond the most passionate appeal for sympathy that she could have uttered—what would the house be without her? What if he were going to lose her? His heart was shaken by a terrible fear as he sat up with misty eyes, and, brokenly uttering her name, held out his arms imploringly.

Oh! God, if she should never wake again! . . . . . .

But she answered him, breathlessly, waking from a wonderful dream, in which she saw him wandering afar through a fragrant garden, that she longed to enter—then as she wept, despairingly hiding her face in her hands, she heard him calling her, first softly, then louder—and louder—

And the garden faded away.

But the dawn found her sobbing out years of loneliness on her husband's breast.

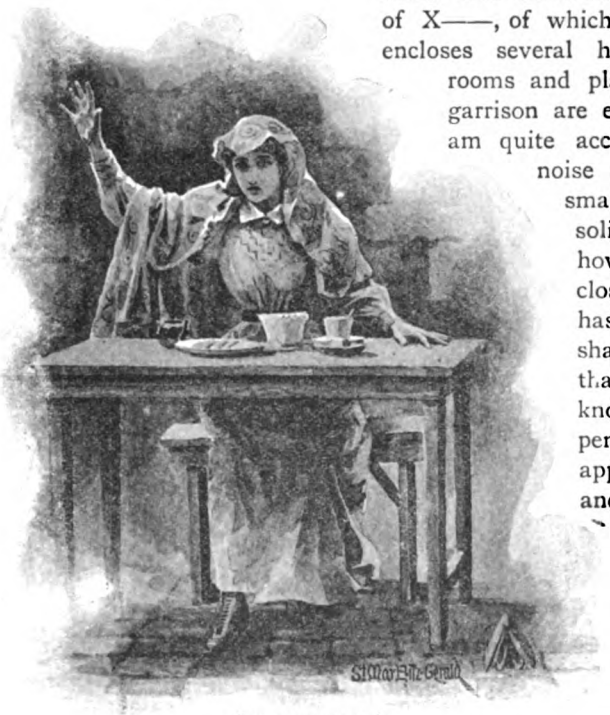
Memoirs of a Female Nihilist.

By Sophie Wassilieff.

Illustrations by J. St. M. Fitz-Gerald.

III.—ONE DAY.

EIGHT o'clock in the morning. I am taking my tea while idly turning over the leaves of a book, when the noise of an explosion causes me to suddenly raise my head. Explosions are not of rare occurrence at the fortress of X——, of which the outer wall encloses several hundred barrack rooms and places where the garrison are exercised, and I am quite accustomed to the noise of cannon and small arms. This solitary explosion, however, seemed so close at hand, and has so strongly shaken the prison, that, anxious to know what has happened, I rise and approach the door and listen. A few moments of silence—then, suddenly, from somewhere in the corridor, comes the jingle of spurs, the clash of swords, and the sound of voices. At first, all this noise is stationary, then gradually it grows and appears to spread on all sides. Something extraordinary has surely happened behind this heavy door, something is now happening which causes me anxiety. But what is it? Standing on tip-toes, I try to look through the small square of glass covering the wicket, but the



"AT BREAKFAST."

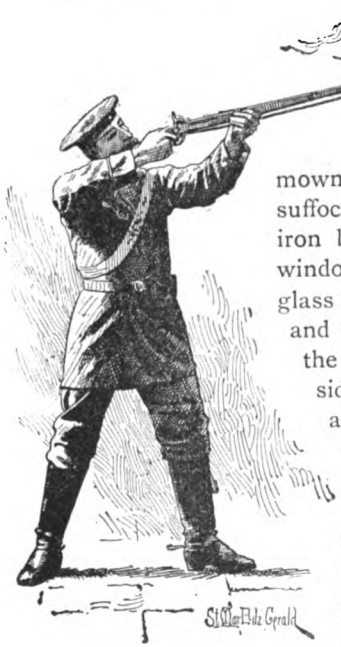
outside shutter is closed, and in spite of the habit which I and other prisoners have of finding some small aperture through which a glimpse of the corridor may be obtained, to-day I can see nothing. Only the noise of heavy and rapid footsteps, each moment stronger and more distinct, comes to my ears. I seem to hear in the distance the choked and panting voice of Captain W—— asking some question, then another nearer and unknown voice replies—"Oh! yes, killed! Killed outright!"

Killed? Who? How and why? Killed? My God! Have I heard aright? Killed! No, no; it is impossible! Breathless, and with beating heart, I consider for a moment in order to find some pretext for having this heavy door opened. Shall I ask to see the director—or the doctor—or say I am thirsty and have no water? The latter is the most simple, and, my jug hastily emptied, I return to the wicket to knock. In ordinary times the slightest blow struck on the little square of glass brings my "blue angel," the warder. Now, I knock loudly, and again and again. The intervals seem like an eternity, but the little shutter remains closed, while the sound of spurs, swords, and voices cross each other in the corridor, sometimes near, then dying away into the distance. A few moments more of anxious waiting and agony almost insupportable, then I raise my arm determined to break the window, when a new noise from the outside causes a shudder to run through me.

"BREAKING THE CELL DOORS."

Clear and sharp, the noise is that of windows broken in rapid succession; it is the signal that the prisoners have revolted. Distant at first, the noise approaches with lightning-like rapidity

on the side of the principal building ot the prison, and as it approaches it is accompanied by cries and loud questioning. Without knowing the cause of the outbreak, I seize the first hard object that comes to my hand, a dictionary, and with one bound I am on my table, and in my turn break the glass of my window, the fragments of which ring gaily as they fall, some into the court-yard, and the others on the stone floor of my cell.



"SHOT HIM THROUGH THE HEAD."

As the window falls to pieces a flood of light invades my cell, and I feel the warm air, and smell a perfume as of new-mown hay. For a moment I am blinded, suffocated, then with both hands I seize the iron bars and draw myself up to the narrow window ledge. A confused noise of breaking glass gradually passing away in the distance, and the cracking of wood fills the pure air of the glorious summer morning; while on all sides are heard the voices of anxious men and women, all asking the same questions, "What has happened? Why are we revolting?"

For a long time these questions remain unanswered, then at last a new and distant voice—at times rendered inaudible by the wind—announces that a warder, or a guard, has killed one ot our comrades, the prisoner Ivanoff, in his cell, and that the prisoners in the other buildings are breaking the furniture and the cell doors.

This reply, which comrades transmit from window to window, petrifies me. After hearing the explosion and the words spoken in the corridor; after a long and anxious incertitude; after this announcement of a revolt in which I myself am taking part—the reply is not unexpected. And yet I understand nothing of the matter; I am thoroughly upset, and my brain refuses to understand and believe. Killed? Ivanoff, the youth whom, by the way, I do not know personally. Killed? But why? Without weapons and under lock and key, what can he have done to deserve death? Has he attempted to escape? But does one

attempt such an enterprise in open day and under the eyes of sentries and warders? Besides, Ivanoff had committed no other crime than fetching from the post-office a letter intended for one of his friends whose name he refused to give, while the friend, arrested since, has assumed the responsibility of the correspondence. Ivanoff was to have been liberated on bail in the course of a few days, and do those in such a position attempt escape on the eve of their release? But why, why has he been killed?

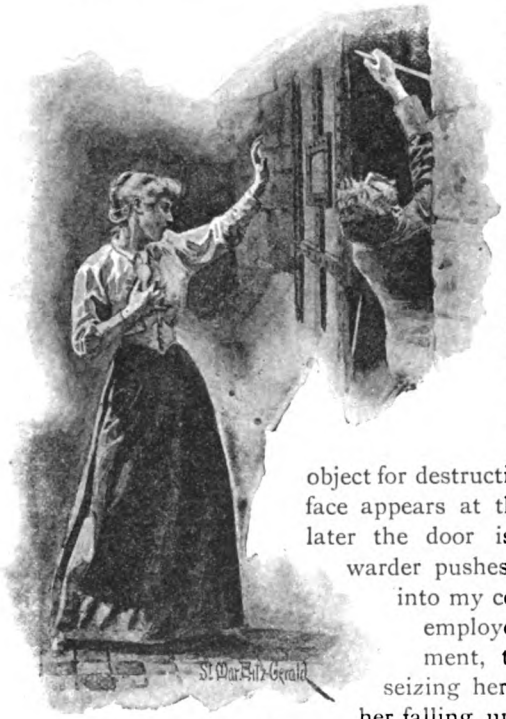
These questions I ask myself while the sound of breaking glass continues. My neighbours appear to have been pursuing a train of thought similar to mine, for I hear several of them calling to our informant, and enquiring, "How and why was he killed?"

Then a long, long, anxious wait, and then the reply, "Yes, killed!" Not by a warder, but by a sentry on guard in the court-yard, who, seeing Ivanoff at his window, shot him through the head. The occupier of a neighbouring cell, also at that moment at his window, saw the shot fired. Others heard the fall of the body. Some have called to him, and received no reply; therefore Ivanoff is dead. As to why he was assassinated, nobody knows.

This recital, several times interrupted by noises and screams, is nevertheless clear and precise. My neighbours, one after the other, descend from their windows, and commence to break up furniture and attack the doors. I follow their example, and recommence my work of destruction. Water-bottle, glass, basin, the wicket in the door, and all that is fragile in my cell flies to pieces, and, with the broken glass from the window, covers the floor. In spite of the feverish haste with which I accomplish this sad task, my heart is not in the work. All this is so unexpected, so unreal, so violent, that it bewilders me. But through the bewilderment the questions, "Is it possible? And why?" continue to force their way. Then I say to myself, "If this man, this soldier, has really killed Ivanoff, it was, perhaps, in a fit of drunkenness; or, perhaps, his gun went off accidentally; or, perhaps, seeing a prisoner at a window, he thought it an attempt at escape." While these ideas, rapid and confused, rush through my brain, I continue to break everything breakable that comes under my hands—because the others are doing the same—because, for prisoners, it is the only means of protest. The sentiment, however, which dominates me is not one of rage, but of infinite sadness, which presses me down and renders weak my trembling arms.

But now the uproar augments. Several prisoners have demolished their beds, and with the broken parts are attacking the

doors. The noise of iron hurled with force against the oak panels dominates all others. Through my broken wicket, I hear the voice of the Commandant ordering the soldiers to fire on any prisoner leaving his cell, and to the warders to manacle all those who are attempting to break down their doors.



"NADINE'S DOOR FORCED."

All these noises, blended with screams and imprecations, the jingle of spurs, the clatter of sword-scabbards crossing and recrossing each other, excite and intoxicate me. Wild at my lack of energy and strength, I seize with both hands my stool. It is old and worm-eaten, and after I have several times flung it on the floor, the joints give way, and it falls to pieces. As I turn to find some other object for destruction, a flushed and agitated face appears at the wicket, and a moment later the door is partly opened, and a warder pushes with violence a woman into my cell. So great is the force employed, and so rapid the movement, that I have difficulty in seizing her in my arms to prevent her falling upon the floor amongst the broken glass and *débris* of furniture.

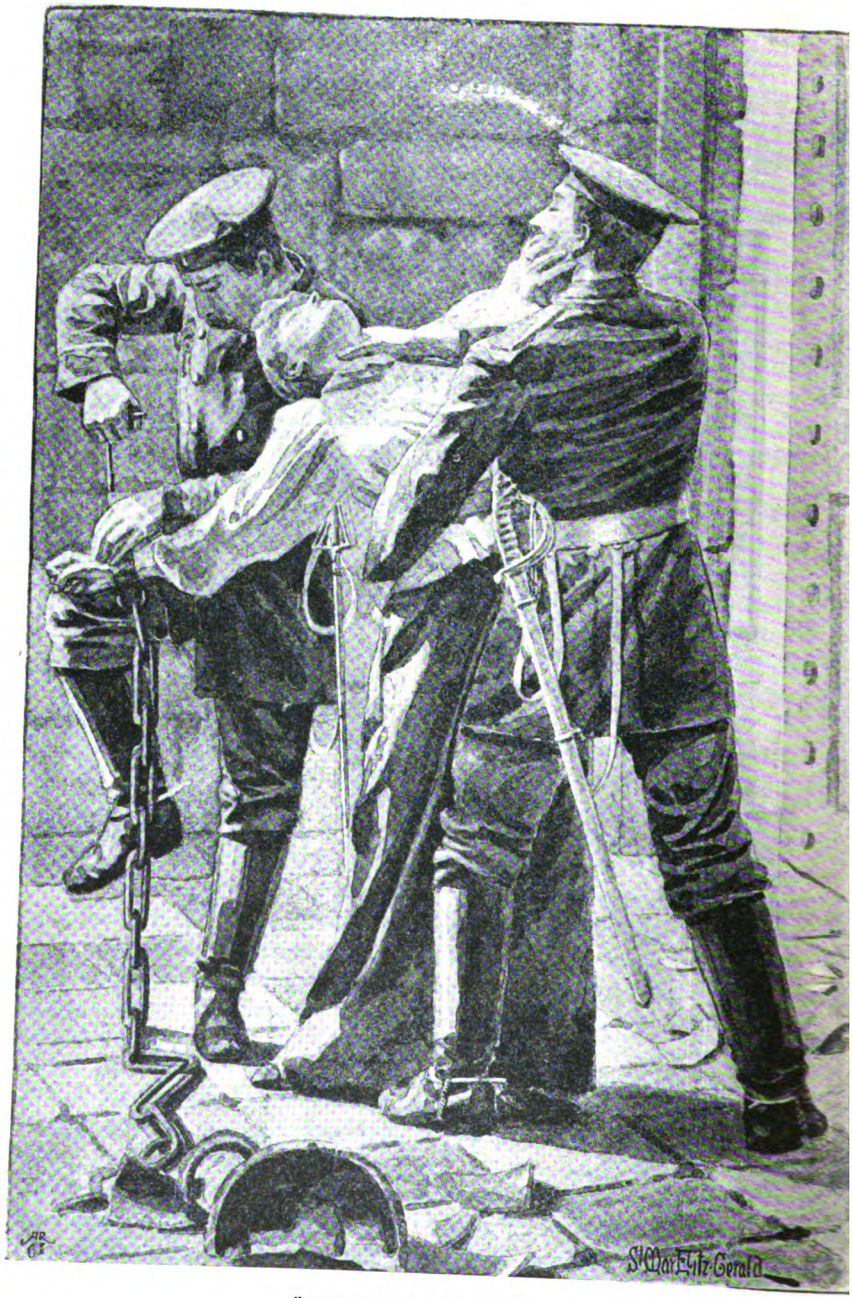
This unexpected visitor is one of my friends and fellow-captives, Nadine B——. Surprised at this unexpected meeting, and the conditions under which it takes place, we are for some instants speechless, but during those few moments I again see all our past, and also note the changes which ten months' imprisonment have wrought in my friend; then, very pale, and trembling with nervous excitement, Nadine explains that her door having been forced during a struggle in the corridor, an officer ordered her to be removed and locked up with another female prisoner. Her cell was in the same corridor as that of Ivanoff, and of the death of the latter there is no doubt. Several comrades, her neighbours,

have seen the body taken away. As to the grounds for his assassination, she heard a group of officers, before her door, conversing, and one said that the Commandant, not satisfied with the manner in which the warders in the corridors discharged their duties in watching the prisoners, gave orders to the sentries to watch from the court-yard and to shoot any prisoner who appeared at his window.

This, then, is the reason for this assassination, in open day, of a defenceless prisoner! The penalty of death for disobedience to one of the prison regulations. Is this, then, a caprice, or an access of ill-temper, on the part of an officer who has no authority in this matter, since prisoners awaiting trial are only responsible to the representatives of our so-called justice? Like a thunderclap this explanation drives away my hesitation and sadness, which are now replaced by indignation and a limitless horror; and while Nadine, sick and worn, throws herself upon my bed, I mount to my window in order to communicate the news to my neighbours. The narrow court-yard, into which the sunshine streams, is, as usual, empty, excepting for the sentry on his eternal march. Above the wall I see a row of soldiers and workwomen's faces, all pale, as they look at the prison and listen to the noises. As I appear at the window a woman covers her face with her hands and screams, and I recognise her as the wife of one of our comrades, a workman. This cry, this gesture, the word "torture" that I hear run along the crest of the wall—all this at first surprises me. As, however, I follow the direction of the eyes of those gazing at me, I discover the cause. My hands, by which I am holding myself to the window bars, are covered with blood, the result of my recent work of destruction of glass and woodwork. There is blood, too, on my light-coloured dress. Poor woman! By voice and gesture I try to calm her. But does she hear me down there? The sentry looks towards me. He is young and very pale, and in his eyes, stupefied by what is going on around him, there is a world of carelessness and passiveness, and as I look into them a shudder of agony and despair passes through me.

The voice of Nadine calling brings me to her side. Partly unconscious, she sobs in the commencement of a nervous crisis, and asks for water. Water! I have none. Not a drop! What is to be done?

And while I try to calm her with gentle words and caresses, and look round in the vain hope that some few drops of the precious fluid may have escaped my notice, the door of the cell is suddenly



"A SOLDIER SEIZES THEM."

opened, and several soldiers, drunk with the uproar and the fight, rush in. A cry of horror escapes me, and instinctively I retreat behind my bed. The noise of chains and the voice of the Commandant ordering that all prisoners be immediately manacled, reassures me. Ah! the chains! Only the chains! I do not intend to resist. All resistance on my part would be useless. Besides, I am anxious to be rid of the presence of these soldiers, and would willingly hold out to them my bleeding hands, if a confused idea in my brain did not tell me that such an act would be one of cowardice. And now a soldier seizes them, and drawing them behind my back, fastens heavy iron manacles to my wrists. Another attempts a similar operation upon Nadine, who, frightened, struggles and screams. Making an effort to calm her, I try to approach, but a sudden jerk on the chain attached to my manacles causes intense pain in my arms, and a rough voice cries "Back." Back? Why? I do not want to abandon Nadine, and instinctively I grasp the bed behind me. Another and a stronger jerk, I stumble, and a piece of broken glass pierces my thin shoe, and cuts my foot, and I am pulled backwards. I am now against that part of the wall where, at the height of about three feet, there is an iron ring, and whilst one of the soldiers attaches my chain to this ring Nadine is dragged towards the opposite wall.

All this passes quickly in our cell, and the soldiers are soon gone and the door closed and locked. But in other cells prisoners resist, and as the struggle goes on and the noise increases so does the beating of my heart, and to me the tumult takes the proportions of a thunderstorm, and, broken down, I listen for some time without understanding the reason for the uproar.

Slowly the noises die away. Nadine, either calmed or worn out, sobs quietly, and in this relative peace, the first for several hours, my mind becomes clearer, and I begin to have some idea of what is passing in and around me.

My principal preoccupation is Nadine. She is pale, and appears to be so exhausted that I momentarily expect her to faint and remain suspended by the chains that rattle as she sobs. With a negative motion of her head and a few words, she assures me that the crisis is passed, that her arms pain her very much, and that she is very thirsty. Chained a few steps away, I cannot render her the slightest aid, and the thought of my helplessness is a cruel suffering. I, too, suffer in the arms. Heavy, they feel as though overrun and stung by thousands of insects, and, when I move, that sensation is changed to one of intense pain. My foot,

too, is very painful, and as the blood oozes from my shoe it forms a pool, and I am very thirsty. All these sensations are lost in my extreme nervous excitement and anxiety for the others, who are now quiet, and for Nadine, from whom I instinctively turn my eyes.

It is very warm, and through the broken window I see a large patch of sky, so transparent and luminous that my eyes, long accustomed to the twilight of my cell, can hardly stand the brightness. There is light everywhere. The walls, dry and white at this period of the year, are flooded with light, and the sun's rays, as they fall on the broken glass on the floor, produce thousands of bright star-like points, flashing and filling the cell with iridescent stars.

"CHAINED AND THROWN FACE DOWNWARD."

With all this light there is the perfume-laden air blowing in at the window, and bringing the odours of the country in summer. Such is the quiet reigning that I can hear the sound of a distant church bell, can count the steps taken by the sentry in the court-yard below, and can hear the rustle of leaves of an open book on the floor, turned over by the gentle breeze.

But this silence is only intermittent. In one of the cells during the struggle preceding the putting on of chains the soldiers threw a prisoner on the ground, and, in order to keep him still, one of them knelt upon his chest. Fainting, and with broken ribs, the unfortunate is rapidly losing his life's blood. His brother, a youth, who has been thrown into his cell as Nadine was into mine, grows frantic at the sight of the blood pouring from the victim's mouth, and screams for help. In another cell a prisoner who for a long time past has suffered from melancholia,

suddenly goes mad, and sings the "Marseillaise" at the top of his voice, laughs wildly, and then shouts orders to imaginary soldiers. Elsewhere, of two sisters who for a long time past have shared the same cell, the eldest, chained to the wall, is shrieking to her sister, who, owing to the rupture of a blood-vessel, has suddenly died. At intervals she screams—"Comrades! Helena is dying—I think she is dead." Below, beneath our feet, a prisoner, too tightly manacled, his hands and feet pressed back and chained behind and thrown face downward, after making desperate efforts to turn over or keep his head up, at last gives up the struggle, and with his mouth against the cold stones and a choking rattle in his throat, he at intervals moans, "Oh! oh!"

Each of these cries, accompanied by the strident clank of chains, produces upon me the effect of a galvanic battery, and I am obliged to put forth all that remains to me of moral strength to prevent myself from screaming and moaning like the others. With my feet in blood and my eyes burning with weeping, and the effect of the strong light, I try to maintain my upright position by leaning against the wall. Then from the depths of my heart a something arises which causes it to throb as though it would burst.

I have never hated! My participation in the revolutionary movement was the outcome of my desire to soothe suffering and misery, and to see realised the dream of a universal happiness and a universal brotherhood; and even here in prison, even this morning, within a few steps of an assassinated comrade, I sought explanations, that is to say, excuses; I thought of an accident, of a misunderstanding. Now, I hate. I hate with all the strength of my soul this stupid and ferocious *régime* whose arbitrary authority puts the lives of thousands of defenceless human beings at the mercy of any one of its mercenaries. I hate it, because of the sufferings and the tears it has caused; for the obstacles it throws in the way of my country's development; for the chains which it places on thousands of bodies and thousands of souls; because of this thirst for blood which is growing within me. Yes! I hate it, and if it sufficed to will—if this tension of my entire being could resolve itself into action—oh! there would at this instant be many heads forming a *cortège* to the bloody head of the comrade who has been so cowardly and ferociously assassinated.

* * * *

Eight o'clock at night. Nadine, very ill, sleeps upon my bed, groaning plaintively each time that an unconscious movement

causes her to touch her arms, whilst I, like all the other prisoners not invalided, remain at my window. In spite of the silence of several months which has been imposed upon us, the conversation flags. We are too tired, and there are too many sick amongst us; there are also the dead. Where are they now? Removed before our chains were taken off, they will this

"REMOVED BEFORE OUR CHAINS WERE TAKEN OFF."

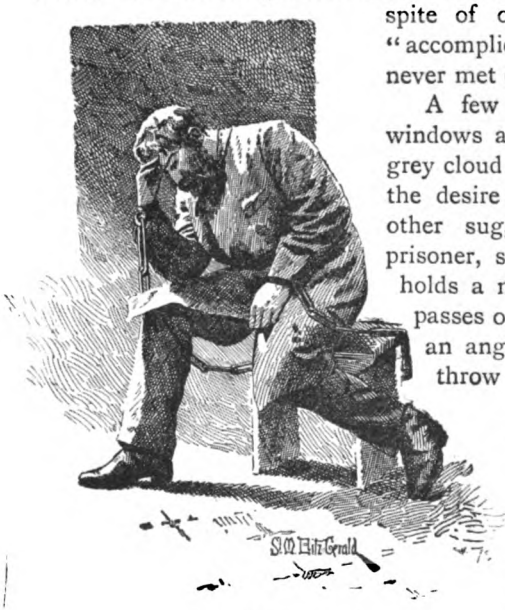
night be buried with other corpses of political prisoners, secretly hid away to rest by the police in order to avoid any public manifestation on the part of friends, or remarks on the part of the local population. These thoughts, at intervals, awaken our anger, and then murmurs are heard. As the night grows deeper, and the sounds of evening are lost in the mists, covering the country as

with a veil, our sick nerves become calmer, and our hatred gives place to an immense and tender sadness. Then we talk of our mothers, of the mother of Helena Q——, and of Ivanoff's mother, both of whom are probably still in ignorance of the death of their children, and are still waiting and hoping. And then we talk of the impression made upon our parents and friends when the echoes of this terrible day reach their ears.

Just as the rattle of drums announces that the gates of the fortress are about to be closed for the night, we hear the tramp of soldiers and the jingle of sword-scabbards in the ground-floor corridor. It is a detachment of soldiers, accompanied by their officers and Captain W ——, who have come to fetch away two of our comrades in order to escort them to the military prison. Young and vigorous, these two prisoners fought fiercely before they were overpowered and chained, and as the Commandant of the fortress, impatient at the duration of the struggle, took part in it, he was roughly handled. Blows struck at a superior officer constitute a crime for which the offenders are to be tried by court-martial. They know it, and we know it. But this haste on the part of the Commandant to have them in his hands—this order to transfer them at night—which is given by the Director in a trembling voice—is it a provocation or a folly? The outer court-yard is gradually and silently filling with moving shadows. Rifles, of which the barrels glitter in the starlight, are pointed towards our windows. This mute menace of a massacre in the darkness finds us indifferent, and not one of us leaves his or her place at the window. But some are ill, and all wounded and tired out by the emotions and struggles of the day, and having been without food for over twenty-six hours; and can we revolt again? As regards the court-martial, none fear, and all would be willing to be tried by it. Its verdicts are pitiless, terrible; but they are verdicts, and it is an end. To-morrow, one after the other, we shall go to the Director's cabinet, and there sign a declaration of our entire solidarity with those who are now being taken away, and that declaration, every word of which will be an insult thrown in the face of the Government, will terminate by a demand for trial by court-martial, not only of ourselves, but also of the Commandant of the fortress. This demand, as usual, will be supported by famine, by the absolute refusal of all prisoners to take any nourishment whatsoever, a process which kills the prisoners, but before which the Government, anxious to avoid the disastrous impression which these

numerous deaths produce, yields, at least in appearance. Whilst we wait all is darkness, for the warders have not lit the little lamps. Through the disordered cells run strange murmurs, and passions are again aroused; while below, those who are being taken away make hasty preparations for their short journey.

I do not know them. We are about a hundred prisoners, arrested in different parts of the province at different times, and in spite of our being described as "accomplices," many of us have never met or heard of each other.



"TIRED OUT."

A few days later, before the windows are replaced, and the dull grey cloud again presses upon us, the desire to see and know each other suggests an idea. Each prisoner, standing at the window, holds a mirror which he or she passes outside the bars. Held at an angle these pieces of glass throw back floating images of pale, phantom-like faces, many of them unknown or unrecognisable. Those who are to-night leaving the prison are, for me, not even phantoms, but only voices heard for the first time this morning, and now so soon to be silenced, by the cord of Troloff, or in some cell at Schlüsselbourg or the Cross.* And yet, as I listen to these voices dying away in the dark distance, I again experience all the despair and all the hate of the day, and my last "adieu" is choked in a sob—and when, a few moments later, the heavy outer door is closed, a great shudder as of death passes over the prison.

(To be continued.)

* Troloff—the Russian public executioner. Schlüsselbourg and the Cross—names of central prisons where the prisoners, placed in small cells, are always chained. Deprived of books or tools, not allowed to see their friends, forbidden to write or receive letters, those subject to the treatment, after a few months, become mad and die.

A Slave of the Ring.

By Alfred Berlyn.

Illustrations by John Gülich.

THE Rev. Thomas Todd, curate of S. Athanasius, Great Wabbleton, sat at the table in his little parlour with a local newspaper in his hand and a troubled expression on his face. There was something incongruous in the appearance of the deep frown that puckered the curate's brows; for his countenance, in its normal aspect, was chubby and plump and bland, and his little grey eyes were wont to shine with a benign and even a humorous twinkle. He was not remarkably young, as curates go; but he was quite young enough to be a subject of absorbing interest to the lady members of the S. Athanasius congregation, and to find himself the frequent recipient of those marks of feminine attention which are the recognised perquisites of the junior assistant clergy.

"A TROUBLED EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE."

Two or three times, the curate raised the paper from the table and re-read the passage that was evidently troubling him; and each time he did so the puckers deepened, and his expression became more and more careworn. It would have been difficult enough for a stranger to find any clue to the cause of his agitation in the portion of the *Wabbleton Post and Grubley Advertiser* which the clergyman held before him; and the wonder would certainly have been increased by the discovery that the passage to which the reverend gentleman's attention was directed was nothing else than the following innocent little paragraph of news:—

"Grubley.—We are asked to state that Benotti's Original Circus, one of the oldest-established and most complete in the kingdom, will give two performances daily at Bounders Green during the whole of next week."

There seemed little enough in such an announcement to bring disquiet to the curate's mind. Possibly, he cherished a conscientious objection to circuses, and remembered that, as Grubley and Great Wabbleton were only three miles apart, a section of the S. Athanasius flock might be allured next week by the meretricious attraction at Bounders Green. Yet even such solicitude for the welfare of the flock of which he was the assistant shepherd seemed scarcely to account either for his obvious distress, or for the fragments of soliloquy that escaped him at every fresh study of the paper.

"Here, of all places in the world—absolute ruin—no, not on any account!"

At length, throwing down the *Post*, the curate seized his hat, started at a rapid pace for the Vicarage, and was soon seated *tête-à-tête* with his superior, an amiable old gentleman with a portly presence and an abiding faith in his assistant's ability to do the whole work of the parish unaided.

"Vicar, do you think you can spare me for the next week or so? The fact is, I am feeling the want of a change badly, and should be glad of a few days to run down to my people in Devonshire."

"My dear Todd, how unfortunate! I have just made arrangements to be away myself next week—and—and the week following. I am going up to London to stay with my old friend Canon Crozier. I was just coming to tell you so when you called. If you don't mind waiting till I return, I've no doubt we can manage to spare you for a day or two. Sorry you're not feeling well. By-the-bye, has that tiresome woman Mrs. Dunderton been worrying you? She came here yesterday about those candles, and threatened to write to the Bishop and denounce us as Popish conspirators. Couldn't you go and talk to her, and see if you can bring her to a more reasonable frame of mind?"

The talk drifted to church and parish matters, and, as soon as he decently could, the curate took his leave, looking very much more depressed and anxious than ever. As he raised the latch of the Vicarage gate, a voice, whose sound he knew only too well, called to him by name; and, turning, he beheld Miss Caroline Cope, the Vicar's daughter, pursuing him skittishly down the garden path. Miss Caroline was not young, neither was she amiable, and her appearance was quite remarkably unattractive.

All this would have mattered little to the curate, but for the fact that she had lately shown for him a marked partiality that had inspired him with considerable uneasiness. At this moment, when his mind was troubled with other matters, her unwelcome appearance aroused in his breast a feeling of extreme irritation.

"Don't run away from me, you naughty, unfeeling man," she began, with an elephantine attempt at archness. "I

"DON'T RUN AWAY FROM ME."

was going to ask you to take me down to the schoolrooms, but I shall have to go alone if you fly away from me like this."

Mr. Todd, fervently wishing that flying were just then among his accomplishments, felt that now, while he was in the humour,

was the time to free himself, finally if possible, from these embarrassing attentions.

"I am sorry I cannot give myself the pleasure of accompanying you, Miss Cope. I have several sick persons and others to call upon in different parts of the parish, and my duties will fully occupy the whole of my morning. I'm afraid I don't happen to be going in the direction of the schools, so I must say 'good morning' here."

And the curate raised his hat and passed on, fortifying himself with the reflection that what might in an ordinary case have been rudeness was in this instance the merest and most necessary self-defence.

Miss Cope stood looking after his retreating figure with a viperous look in her face, and with a feeling of intense rage, which she promised herself to translate into action at the very earliest opportunity.

'A VIPEROUS LOOK IN HER FACE."

Early in the following week, the Vicar started for London, and his curate was left in sole charge of the parish. That there was something amiss with Mr. Todd was evident to all who came in contact with him, both before and after the Vicar's departure. His former geniality seemed to have quite deserted him, and he looked worried, anxious, and ill. The ladies of S. Athanasius were greatly concerned at the change, and speculated wildly as to its cause. There was one among them, however, who made no comment upon the subject, and appeared, in fact, to ignore the curate's existence altogether. Whatever might be the source of that gentleman's troubles, he had, at any rate, freed himself from the unwelcome advances of Miss Caroline Cope.

The third morning after the Vicar's departure, his assistant was sent for to visit a sick parishioner who lived just outside Great Wabbleton, on the high road to Grubley. The summons was an imperative one; but he obeyed it with a curious and unwonted reluctance. As he reached the outskirts of the town and struck into the Grubley road, his distaste

for his errand seemed to increase, and he looked uneasily from side to side with a strange, furtive glance, in singular contrast to his usual steady gaze and cheerful smile. He reached his destination, however, without adventure, and remained for some time at the invalid's bedside. His return journey was destined to be more eventful. He had not proceeded far on his way back to Great Wabbleton, when a showily-dressed woman, who was passing him on the road, stopped short and regarded him with a prolonged and half-puzzled stare that ended in a sudden cry of amazed recognition. "Well—I'm blest—it's Tommy!"

She was a buxom, and by no means unattractive, person of about five-and-thirty, with an irresistibly "horsey" suggestion about her appearance and gait. As the curate's eye met hers, he turned deadly pale, and his knees trembled beneath him. That which he had dreaded for days and nights had come to pass.

"Well, I'm blest!" said the lady again, "who'd have thought of meeting you here after all these years—and in this make-up, too! But I should have known you among a thousand, all the same. Why, Tommy, you don't mean to say they've gone and made a parson of you?"

The curate was desperate. His first impulse was to deny all knowledge of the woman who stood gazing into his face with a comical expression of mingled amusement and surprise. But her next words showed him the hopelessness of such a course.

"IT'S TOMMY!"

"You're not going to say you don't know me, Tommy, though it *is* nigh twenty years

since we were in the ring together, and you've got into a black coat and a dog-collar. Fancy them making a parson of you; Lord, who'd have thought it! Well, I've had a leg-up, too, since then. I'm Madame Benotti now. The old lady died, and he made me missus of himself and the show. He often talks about you, and wouldn't he stare, just, to see you in this rig-out!"

By this time, the Rev. Thomas Todd had recovered himself sufficiently to speak, and had decided that a bold course was the safest.

"I'm really glad to see you again," he said, with a shuddering thought of the fate of Ananias; "it reminds me so of the old times. But, you see, things are changed with me. You remember the old gentleman who adopted me, and took me away from the circus? Well, he sent me to school and college, and then set his heart on my becoming, as you say, a parson. I haven't forgotten the old days, but—but you see, if the people round here knew about my having been——"

"Lor' bless you, Tommy," broke in the good-natured *équestrienne*, "you don't think I'd be so mean as to go and queer an old pal's pitch; you've nothing to fear from me; don't be afraid, there's nobody coming"—for the curate was looking distractedly round. "Well, I'm mighty glad to have seen you again, even in this get-up, but I won't stop and talk to you any longer, or one of your flock might come round the corner, and then—O my! wouldn't there be a rumpus? Ha, ha, ha!"

She laughed loudly, and the clergyman looked round again in an agony.

"Now, Tommy, good-bye to you, and good luck. But look here, before you go, just for the sake of the old times, when you were 'little Sandy,' and I used to do the bare-backed business, you'll give us a kiss, won't you, old man?"

And before the unhappy curate could prevent her, Madame Benotti had flung her muscular arms round his neck, and imprinted two sounding kisses on his cheeks.

At that fatal moment, a female figure came round the bend of the road, and, to his indescribable horror, the curate recognised the dread form of the Vicar's daughter. She had seen all—of that there could be no doubt, but she came on, passed them, and continued on her way to Grubley without the smallest sign of recognition.

"My goodness, Tommy, I hope that old cat wasn't one of your

flock," remarked Madame Benotti, with real concern, as soon as she had passed. "You look as scared as if you had seen a ghost; I hope I haven't——"

But the curate waited to hear no more. With a hurried "Good-bye" he tore himself away, and made his way back to his apartments in a state bordering on desperation.

Locking himself in, he paced the room for some time, groaning aloud in a perfect frenzy of misery and apprehension. Then he flung himself into his chair, buried his face in his hands, and tried to think what was best to be done. After painful and intense thought, he decided that there was nothing for it but to tell Miss Cope the whole story, and appeal to her honour to keep

"FLUNG HER MUSCULAR ARMS ROUND HIS NECK."

it to herself. But how if she chose to revenge herself upon him by refusing to believe the story, or by declining to keep it secret? He could not conceal from himself that either of these results was more than possible. In that case, there remained only one resource; and it was of so terrible a nature that the curate positively shuddered at its contemplation. But it might even come to that; and better even *that*, he told himself, than the exposure, the ridicule, and the professional ruin that must otherwise befall him.

Hour after hour passed, and he was still nerving himself for the coming interview, when a tap came at the door, and a note, left by

hand, was brought in to him. He glanced at the address, and tore open the envelope with trembling hand. It contained these few words, without any sort of preliminary :—

"I think it right to give you warning that I shall take the earliest opportunity of making known your disgraceful conduct witnessed by me in the public streets this morning. "CAROLINE COPE."

"MISS COPE WAS ENGAGED."

The Rev. Thomas Todd placed the letter in his pocket with an air of desperate resolve, and started forth for the Vicarage without another moment's delay. It was now or never—if he hesitated, even for an hour, he might be irretrievably lost.

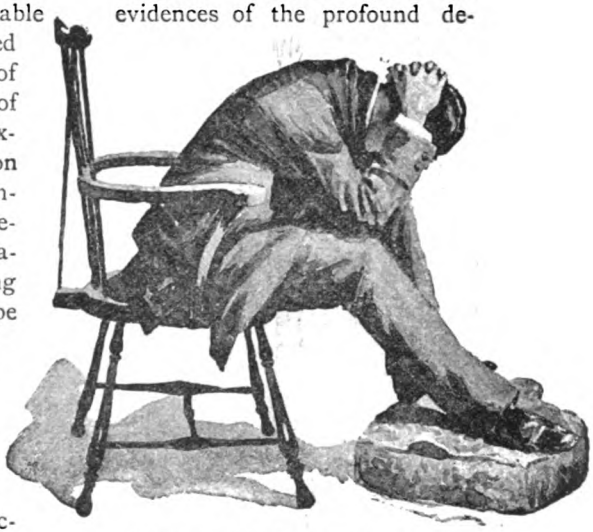
The first answer brought to him by the servant who opened the Vicarage door was not encouraging. "Miss Cope was engaged, and could not see Mr. Todd." But the curate dared not allow himself to be put off so easily. "Tell Miss Cope I *must* see her on business of the most serious importance," he said; and the message was duly carried to the Vicar's daughter. That lady, after a moment's hesitation, felt herself unable any longer to resist enjoying a foretaste of her coming triumph, and ordered Mr. Todd to be admitted.

The interview that followed confirmed the curate's worst fears. He told Miss Cope the whole story, and she flatly refused to believe a word of it. He begged her to go herself to the circus proprietor and his wife for proof of its truth, and she simply laughed in his face. He appealed to her honour to keep the story secret, and she coldly reminded him of the duty that devolved upon her, in her father's absence, of protecting the morals of his congregation.

Then at last, beaten and baffled at all points, the unhappy curate played his final card. He offered the Vicar's daughter the best possible evidence of his sincerity by asking her to become his wife. The effect was magical. It was the first chance of a husband that had ever come to Caroline in her thirty-nine years of life, and she had an inward conviction that it would be the last. The secret she had just learnt was known to no one in the parish

but herself, and so, after a brief pretence of further parley to save appearances, she jumped at the offer, and the curate left the Vicarage an engaged man. His last desperate throw had succeeded. He had saved his position and his reputation; but at what a cost he dared not even think.

Within the next day or two, it became evident to all whom he met that there was something very seriously wrong with the Rev. Thomas Todd. His manner became first morose and abstracted, and then wild and eccentric. He was seen very little in the town, and when he did appear, his haggard face, his strange, absent air, and the unmistakable evidences of the profound depression that possessed him, were the objects of general remark. Some of the more charitable expressed a confident opinion that the curate had committed a crime; others decided, with more penetration, that he was going mad. From Miss Cope he kept carefully aloof. It had been arranged at that fatal interview that their engagement should be kept secret until the return of the Vicar, whose sanction must be obtained before the affair could be made public. Miss Cope was aware that the curate had two sermons to prepare in addition to his parish duties—for he would have to preach twice on Sunday owing to her father's absence; so she did not allow his non-appearance at the Vicarage on Friday or Saturday to greatly surprise her.



"SOMETHING VERY SERIOUSLY WRONG."

If she could have seen the way in which the preparation of those sermons was proceeding, she might have found more cause for anxiety. Shut up in his room with some sheets of blank paper before him, the curate sat for hours together, staring vacantly at the wall before him, and occasionally giving vent to a loud, strange laugh. The evening of Saturday passed into night, and

still he sat on, looking before him into the darkness with the same vacant stare, and uttering from time to time the same wild, hoarse chuckle.

The light of Sunday morning, streaming into the room, fell upon a weird, dishevelled figure, that still stared fixedly at the wall, and every now and then muttered strange and wholly unclerical words and phrases. Still the hours wore on, until the sun rose high in the heavens, and the bells began to ring for church. Then came a knock at the curate's door. His landlady, surprised by his neglect of the breakfast hour, had been positively alarmed when he showed no sign of heeding the approach of church time. The knock was repeated; and then the clergyman sprang to his feet and unlocked the door.

"Wait a moment," he cried, with a wild laugh. "*Now* come in!"

The landlady put her head in at the door, and uttered a shriek of horror and amazement. The Rev. Thomas Todd was standing on his head in the middle of the hearthrug.

"THE REV. THOMAS TODD WAS STANDING ON HIS HEAD."

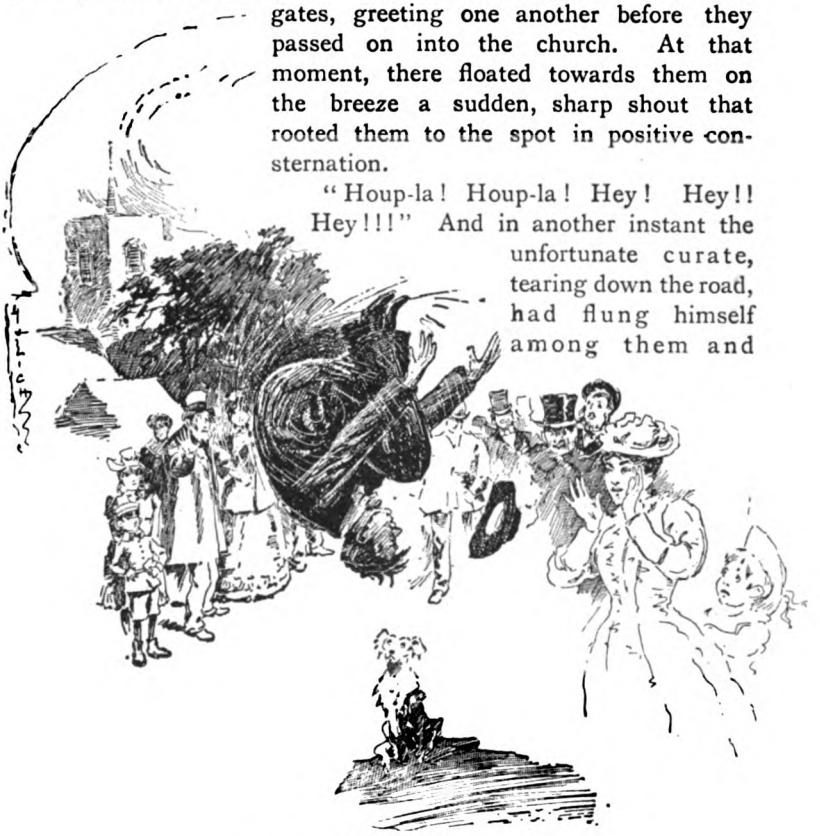
"God bless us and save us—the poor gentleman's gone clean out of his wits!"

The curate's only reply was a shrill whoop, followed by an agile leap into an upright position, and a wild grab at the terrified lady, whose thirteen stone of solid matronhood he whirled round his head and tossed across the room as if it had been a

feather-weight. Then, hatless and unkempt, he tore down stairs into the street, and started at a furious pace in the direction of S. Athanasius.

It wanted three minutes to eleven, and the last stroke of the clanky church-bell had just died away in a series of unmusical vibrations. The townspeople, in all the added importance of Sunday clothes, gathered in an ever-thickening knot about the gates, greeting one another before they passed on into the church. At that moment, there floated towards them on the breeze a sudden, sharp shout that rooted them to the spot in positive consternation.

"Houp-la! Houp-la! Hey! Hey!! Hey!!!" And in another instant the unfortunate curate, tearing down the road, had flung himself among them and



"SCATTERED THEM RIGHT AND LEFT."

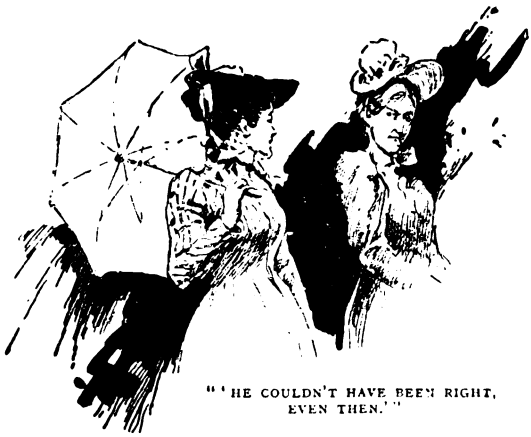
scattered them right and left by a series of vigorous and splendidly-executed somersaults. With a well-directed leap, and a wild cry of "Here we are again!" he vaulted lightly over the church gate, and began to run up the path towards the door, until, at last, the horrified onlookers awoke to the realities of the

situation and half-a-dozen sturdy townsmen rushed upon and seized the unhappy man. Then a woman's piercing scream was heard, and the Vicar's daughter, who had just arrived on the scene, fell fainting to the ground.

There was no service at S. Athanasius that morning, and the Rev. Thomas Todd was later on conveyed, still shouting fragments of circus dialogue, to the County Lunatic Asylum. The curate's mind had temporarily given way beneath the strain of the position in which he had found himself placed, and of the horrible future that lay before him, and his insanity had taken the form of an imaginary return to the scenes of his early life. When, some two years later, he was discharged cured, he attached himself to a mission about to start for the South African Coast, and left England without re-visiting Great Wabbleton.

Long afterwards, Miss Caroline Cope, in a burst of confidence, one day related to her special friend, Miss Lavinia Murby, the doctor's daughter, how the Rev. Thomas Todd had proposed to her a few days before his melancholy seizure.

"Ah, my dear, you see he couldn't have been right, even then," was that lady's sympathetic comment.



"'HE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN RIGHT, EVEN THEN.'"

People I Have Never Met.

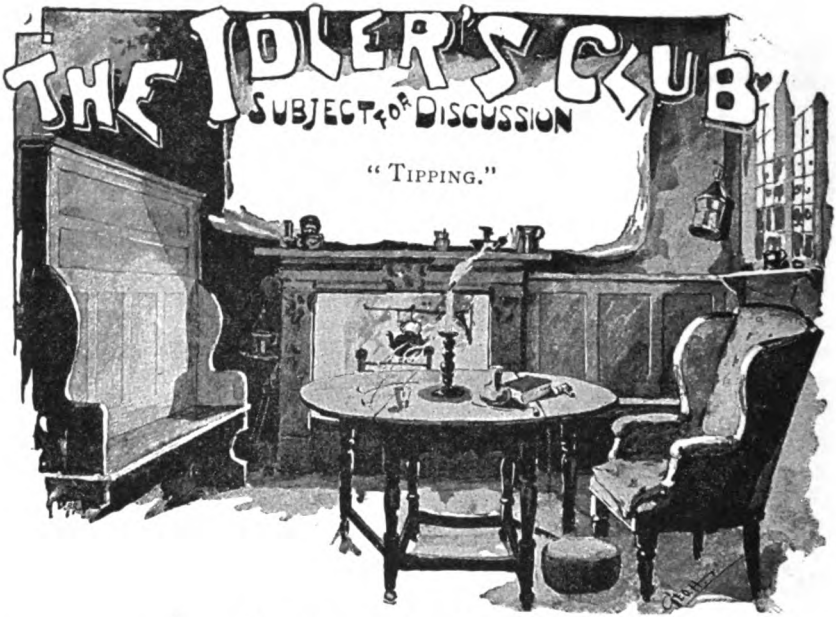
By Scott Rankin.

ZANGWILL.

"I will show this Anglo-Jewish community that I am a man to be reckoned with. I will crush it—not it me. Then some day it will find out its mistake; and it will seize the hem of my coat, and beseech me to be its Rabbi. Then, and only then, shall we have true Judaism in London.

"The folk who compose our picture are children of the Ghetto. If they are not the children, they are at least the grandchildren of the Ghetto."

—"Children of the Ghetto."



Josepn Hatton on the art of tipping.

Almost everything has been reduced to an art. You can learn journalism outside a newspaper, playwriting by theory, French without a master. How to succeed in literature and how not; both ways have been laid down for the student. There is scarcely an art or a habit you cannot learn in books. Etiquette, how to make up, stock-jobbing, acting, gardening, and a host of intellectual pursuits, have their rules and regulations; but the mysterious and delicate art of tipping as yet remains unexploited in the social ethics of this much-taught generation. It is high time that the proper method of giving tips should be defined, its laws codified, its many possibilities of error guarded against, and some system set forth whereby the tipper may give the greatest satisfaction to the tipped at the most moderate, if not the least, outlay in current coin of the realm. The art could be illustrated with many examples from the earliest times. Pelagia's tip to Hypatia's father was the dancer's cestus, which was jewelled with precious stones enough to stock the shop of a Bond Street jeweller of our own time. According to the truthful interpretation of the old English days which we find in the drama, the most popular method of tipping was to present your gold in a long, knitted purse, which you threw at the tippee's feet or slapped into the

palm of his hand; but this system seems to have lapsed; and no fresh regulation has been established in the unwritten laws of the *douceur*, which goes back even before the days when extravagant and unwilling tips were often enforced with pincers, racks, and other imperative inventions. Monte Cristo gave wonderful tips, and Monte Carlo is lavish to this day. The genius that wrecked Panama has an open hand. Promoters of London companies know how to be liberal. Not much art is required, I believe, to distribute largess of this kind. Nor are certain classes of American aldermen difficult to deal with. The art that should be made most clear is how to pay your host's servants for your host's hospitality; how to show your gratitude to a newspaper man without hurting his *amour propre;* how to meet the requirements of the middleman of life and labour without "giving yourself away"; how to tip the parson when you are married; and, in this connection, one may remark the consolation of dying; the tippee does not trouble you at your own funeral.

* * * *

With reference to waiters, deans, and other public servants.

The waiter at public dinners is a very considerate person. He assists you in every possible way he can. With every dish he practically jogs your memory; and, as an accompaniment to the dessert, he informs you that he "must now leave"; is there "anything else he can do for you?" If you are of a reflective nature you may, in a moment of abstraction, rise from your seat and shake hands with him; but if, as a right-minded citizen, you have constantly in view the universal claim upon your purse, you will thank your friendly and condescending attendant, and pay him for the services he has rendered to his employer. You may in your thoughtlessness and abstraction have jeopardised the success of the waiter's arrangements for carrying off a certain bottle of wine which he had planted for convenient removal. How much you should give him is considered to depend upon the quality of the wine which you have been fully charged for with your ticket; and this question of cuisine and wine still further complicates the difficult adjustment of the rightful claims of the attendant and what is due to your own honour, not to mention your reputation as a *gourmet*. An irreverent American, after a first experience, I conclude, of English travel, said that you are safe in tipping any Britisher below the dignity of a bishop; but a fellow-countryman, guided by this opinion, felt very unhappy

when, after being shown over a famous cathedral by the dean, he slipped half-a-sovereign into his very reverend guide's hand, and received, in return, an intimation that the poor's box was in the porch. I remember on one occasion, when I was investigating a question that called for special courtesy on the part of a public official, I was disturbed during my work with the question whether I might tip him, and, if so, to what extent. The subject almost "got on my nerves" before the inquiry, which lasted an hour or two, came to an end; at last I determined that it was a case for a tip. I gave him ten shillings. For a moment I thought I had offended him, and, remembering the dean and the poor box, was about to say, "Give it to a charity," when the official plaintively inquired if I couldn't "make it a sovereign?"

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He discourses concerning the ethics of tipping.

Give up the idea that tipping will succumb to any agitation. So long as commodities have to be paid for in cash, and not in fine words and sweet smiles, tipping will exist. The moralist may rave against it, but ask him in what way his gratitude manifests itself when a railway porter politely relieves him of half-a-dozen bags, and deposits them in a snug corner, whilst he has barely time to take his ticket at the booking-office. It is surely impossible to abuse the same porter if, out of a feeling of recognition for favours previously received, he leaves the belated passenger to manage the best way he can under a cartload of shawls, rugs, hat and bonnet-boxes, to attend again to your comforts. You hardly sympathise with your fellow-traveller, although be may be using very strong language against the identical porter, in whose favour, for the second time, you part with a few coppers. It is the desire to secure the comforts and commodities provided by the activity of others that will perpetuate tipping. After all, this is not limited to menials. It is given, and unscrupulously accepted by all grades of society, and by all conditions of men. I have known a company director give to a titled nobody a berth promised to someone else, because he had been familiarly addressed by His Lordship in a public place, and had been "honoured" by a few minutes' conversation. That was not, of course, a tip in the ordinary sense of the word, but it amounted, however, to the same thing. It secured a good berth to his "Excellency." And what say you of the whiskies and waters, brandies and sodas, the champagne, oysters, luncheons, and

dinners to which our good city men generously ask a would-be customer? That, I suppose, is called "paving the way to a good business." I have not unfrequently heard people regret that they were unable to refuse a favour in return for a civility. That civility was most likely a dinner, or even something less. Kisses distributed by ladies in hotly-contested constituencies, the promise of a Government post, an invitation to a party, a mere familiar recognition, a penny, are all varieties which make the thing so general.

* * * *

He believes the custom will die out with human nature.

Wedding presents are not given without an *arrière pensée*, and at Christmas our object is mostly to please the parents. Our indignation, however, is not roused by this, because we are in the habit, I suppose, of distributing and receiving such acknowledgments ourselves. We want to suppress small tips; in fact, such as are most wanted by the recipient, whose only source of revenue they constitute in many cases. We fail to realise that, were servants well paid, "tipping" would not take the form of an imposition. Employers, especially at hotels and restaurants, either give ridiculously low wages, or suppress these altogether, and in many establishments hire the tables to the waiters at so much a day or week for the privilege of serving. At present this custom has become so deeply rooted that it has given growth to a most perfect secret code of signs and marks by which each class of servants is informed how much he has to expect from the liberality of the inexperienced and unwary stranger. This applies especially to hotel servants, and has become the crying abuse against which we try to react. This code is not local, but has acquired an internationality which professors of Volapuk would be proud to claim for their language. I remember once an irascible old gentleman complaining bitterly against the incivility of the hotel servants, who never helped him with his traps. He found no exception to the rule except when his wanderings took him to some remote part of Scotland, where, he assured me, the "*braying of the socialist pedants had not yet been heard.*" I suspected that my friend was not over-generous, and timidly sounded him on the point. His reply confirmed my suspicion. I thereupon showed him the cause of the servants' inattention, amounting sometimes even to rudeness—a *little chalk mark on each bag*. I advised him to carefully wipe that off after leaving the hotels. The effect was most satis-

factory—my friend has had no reason to complain since, at least when he got into a hotel. The position of hotel labels also serves to indicate if anything can be expected from the traveller. Of course, this is not countenanced by "mine host," who dismisses the user of such messages, but as that man is generally a wide-awake and useful rogue, there is little doubt but that he is reinstated in his functions shortly after the traveller is gone. Beggars and tramps have a similar system of conveying to their *confrères* information as to the likely reception they may expect from the occupants of the different residences on the road. They never fail to warn them against dogs and other disagreeable surprise or dangers, should they by some unaccountable absent-mindedness forget that there is such a thing as the eighth commandment. In conclusion, *pourboire*, *buona mancia*, *backshish*, tipping or bribery, was born with man, and will only die out with him.

* * * *

Giuseppe of the Cafe Doney, at Florence: his experience.

Ah! Milor, what do I think of "teeping?" What would become of me without it? In some forty or fifty years I shall be a rich man, and perhaps keep a *café* myself, thanks to the benevolence and generosity of the American and English milors. At first I was a cabman, but in Italy no one gives the cabman a *pourboire;* so my friends said, "Ah! Giuseppe, you must make money somehow. Become a waiter, and you will grow rich." So they took me to our padrone, and he made me a waiter, and I am growing rich on "teeps." But it is not my own compatriots, Milor, who make me rich. When I attend one of them, he will only give me ten centimes (a penny), and if I attend two of them they will give me fifteen centimes between them. But the English and Americans will sometimes give me fifty or a hundred centimes at a time. But, alas! that happens very seldom. When I am in luck I save two hundred centimes a day (1s. 8d.), and shall, in a great many years, have a *café* of my own. Perhaps Milor will assist? *Grazie.*

* * * *

The head waiter at the *—— sets forth his views.

Instead of complaining against tipping, the public should oblige the employers to pay their servants more liberally. In modern restaurants—and I suppose the custom has come from Paris—waiters have to pay the employers sums varying from one to four shillings a day according to the number and position of tables they serve. Their work averages from fourteen to sixteen hours

a day. It begins at eight, and sometimes long after midnight they are still at work. Out of their earnings they have to pay all breakages and washing, and, for the thirty to thirty-five shillings they earn a week, they have to put up, from a class of customers, with patience and a perpetual smile, more abuse than one in any other ten men would stand. It not unfrequently happens that a waiter would do without it rather than accept a tip which assumes the form of an insult. We look upon it as a remuneration due to us, and, after trying to satisfy the client, we do not see why he should think it an unbearable nuisance, and treat the recipient with contempt. In many cases, after exacting the most constant attention, and heaping unmerited abuse on the irresponsible waiter, the client who has most likely spent on himself enough to keep a family a whole week, grudges the sixpence he has to give the attendant, and makes him feel it by throwing the coppers down, accompanying the action by an insulting remark. Like all men whose business it is to minister to the comfort of others, many among us are very shrewd observers, and can tell at a glance what treatment we may expect from certain customers, and we behave accordingly. We are seldom mistaken in our judgment. Experience has taught us that the most generous, and at the same time most gentlemanly, "tippers" are the Israelitish Anglo-German financiers. There is a difference between them and the young spendthrift who inconsiderately throws away his money. No, sir, the Anglo-German banker, orders, goes carefully through the account, and then gives his money liberally. After him comes the Russian. The Englishman, who is next best, is closely followed by the French and German.

* * * *

His opinion of Americans as tippers.

The American is nowhere. It is a mistaken idea to believe that he is generous. Of course, there are exceptions to the rule, but the majority of them come out here just to see the sights, and talk about them on their return. A certain sum is laid aside for the purpose, and I am sure they contrive to make economies upon it. The Americans are, besides, disagreeable to serve. They never lose the opportunity of making disparaging comparisons between their country and the old world. Our restaurants are country inns compared to theirs, their waiters are smarter, their services of better class, our cooking is miles behind theirs, and as to con-

coction of drinks, of course we have to take a back seat. We are also very slow. A steak, in Chicago, for instance, is cooked in about the fifteenth of the time required here. When it comes to paying, the American finds that everything is also dearer over here; gives very little or nothing to *that inattentive waiter*, threatens to lodge a complaint against him, and goes away satisfied that everyone is impressed by the grandeur of the Great Republic as represented by himself, one of its worthy citizens.

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Of Scotchmen and millionaires.

In England, the Scotch are the least liberal. In Scotland, waiters and hotel servants are paid. An attempt to introduce in Edinburgh the continental system failed most ignominiously in 1886, and the enterprising *restaurateur* had to revert to the local system, and replace all the former waiters, who ran back to London rather than be reduced to the dire necessity of going into the workhouse. Young men, as a rule, are more generous than elderly people, and the fair sex is, in general, very stingy. A gentleman accompanied by a lady, if she is only an acquaintance, is sure to tip generously, *pour la galerie*, although he may look as if he wanted to accompany every penny by a kick. But when the same person dines with his wife or sister, the remuneration is as small as decency can permit. When a waiter spots such a relation between a party of diners, he generally tries to escape the obligation of offering them a table. At the large restaurants we gauge the diners' liberality very frequently at one glance, and in any case form an accurate opinion of him by the way he orders his *menu*. We know whether we have to do with a gentleman or a cad, and whether his subsequent parsimoniousness is caused by cussedness or simply ignorance of the customs of such establishments, and we treat him in consequence. It is pitiful sometimes to see all the ruses employed by well-meaning people, unwilling to be thought unaccustomed to the life of a large restaurant, and my advice to such persons would be to remain natural rather than become ridiculous. The manner in which the tip is given varies according to the nationality and character of the donor. The most ostentatious among these is the South American millionaire, whose gift varies according to the number of people present. As a rule, the wealthy man is not generous.

A commissionnaire can tell people's dispositions at sight.

I can say at first sight whether a person is of a kindly disposition, for I would rather assist such a person and get nothing than one who makes me feel the weight of his liberality. The amount a man may make depends a great deal on his wits. To forestall a gentleman's wishes, give him the necessary information, and to the point; to assist him when assistance is most needed, and not before, is what is most appreciated. When in a theatre I see a couple occupying a bad seat, when better ones are vacant, I make the suggestion, and would certainly be astonished if the gentleman did not acknowledge the hint. When the working classes do not syndicate they have to accept wages so ridiculously low that they are obliged to find some means of increasing their earnings. But will it ever be possible to suppress the "evil"? Allow me to doubt it. The thing is, therefore, to prevent tipping taking the form of an imposition. This can only be done by paying good wages.

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Barr gives the straight tip.

A native of Cuba once said to me, with an air of proud superiority, "We have the yellow fever *always* in Havana." I was unable to make any such boastful claim for North America, and so the Cuban rightly thought he had the advantage of me. They think nothing of the yellow fever in Havana, but when the malady is imported into Florida the people of that peninsula become panic-stricken. The yellow fever in the Southern States strikes terror. It seems to be worse in its effects when it enters the States than it is where they always have it. So it is with tipping. It is always present in Europe in a mild form, but periodically tipping swoops down upon the United States, and its effects are dreadful to contemplate. If tipping ever becomes epidemic in America, the unfortunate citizens will have to leave, and seek a cheaper country, for the haughty waiter in an American hotel scorns the humbler coins of the realm, and accepts nothing less than half a dollar. Happily, tipping has, up to date, been more or less of an exotic in America, but I have grave fears that the Chicago Exhibition, attracting as it does so many incurable tippers from Europe, will cause the disease to take firm root in the States, and entail years of suffering hereafter.

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Summing up.

I do not agree with the member of the club who holds in one paragraph that Scotsmen are mean in the giving of tips. Speaking as a Scotsman myself, I admit that we like to go the whole distance from Liverpool Street

to Charing Cross for our penny. We desire to get the worth of our bawbee. And it is a cold day when we don't. But it must be remembered that a Scotsman is conscientious, and he knows that tipping is an indefensible vice, so he discourages it as much as possible, being compelled by custom to fall in with it. Then, again, the man who claims that Americans are not liberal doesn't know what he is talking about. The trouble with the American is that he does not know the exact amount to give, and that bothers him, and causes him to curse the custom in choice and varied language. Speaking now as an American, I will give a tip right here. If Conan Doyle, or George Meredith, or some author in whom Americans have confidence, would get out a book entitled, say, "The Right Tip, or Tuppence on the Shilling," giving exactly the correct sum to pay on all occasions, Americans would buy up the whole edition and bless the author. I think Americans are altogether too lavish with their tips, and thus make it difficult for us poorer people, whom nobody tips, to get along. A friend of mine, on leaving one of the big London hotels, changed several five pound notes into half-crowns, and distributed these coins right and left all the way from his rooms to the carriage, giving one or more to every person who looked as if he would accept. He met no refusals, and departed amidst much *éclat*. He thought he had done the square thing, as he expressed it, but I looked on the action as corrupting and indefensible. He deserves to have his name blazoned here as a warning, but I shall not mention it, merely contenting myself by saying that he was formerly a United States senator, was at that time Minister to Spain, and is at the present moment President of the World's Fair.

The portrait of Mrs. Henniker, which appeared in *The Idler* for May—"Lions in their Dens": V. The Lord Lieutenant at Dublin Castle—was from a photograph taken by Messrs. Werner and Son, of Dublin.

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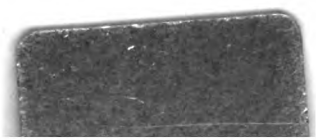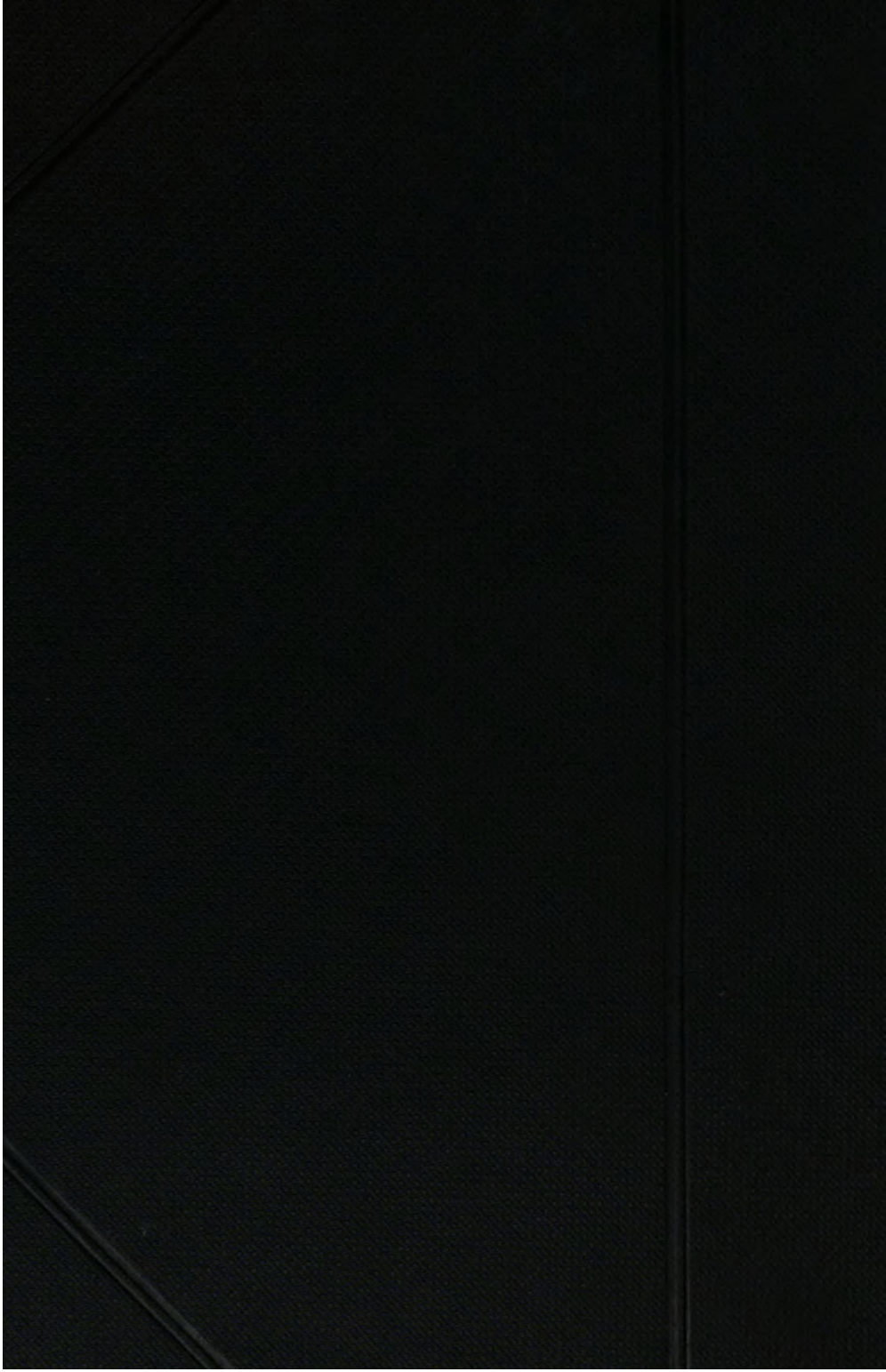
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